RADICALISATION AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN UNITED KINGDOM PRISONS

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Dickson O. A. AJISAFE
(15322735)

Supervisor: Prof Christopher Isike

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ABSTRACT

The mandate of prisons is to provide an enabling environment for the reformation of law breakers, but they are also increasingly doing the exact opposite, deepening, and contributing to the radicalisation of inmates and exposing them to extremist ideologies that ultimately lead them to terrorist activities upon release. Several accounts of convicted terrorists in European countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and elsewhere point to this paradox. These accounts also call for serious questions on why and how prisons in the UK are sites for recruitment of inmates into radical ideology and violent extremist orientation. This study therefore posed several critical questions: What makes prison radicalisation distinct from other channels of radicalisation? What specific prisons administrative systems in the UK foster radicalisation and violent extremism? Why and how do certain inmates end up embracing radical ideologies in UK prisons while others do not? How is the UK government responding, and how should it respond, to the challenges of radicalisation in its prisons? Finally, how might a more holistic understanding of prison radicalisation in the UK assist in resolving the "upstream" puzzle of tackling global terrorism? Drawing critical insights from prisons in the UK, this study relied on extensive primary and secondary sources of data as well as perspectives from social network and contagion theories to understand and explain the causes, patterns, and trajectories of radicalisation in prisons in the United Kingdom. The study noted that even though the UK government has initiated a couple of legislative measures to combat radical and extremist behaviours within and outside prison estates, and as good as the legislation seems, it is not enough to achieve reformation of offenders, nor is it capable of changing behaviours of radicals. Arguably, a detailed understanding of prison radicalisation in the United Kingdom will assist policymakers to map out ways to curb the recruitment of inmates into extremist and radical activities and invariably help to curb the spread of violent ideology inside the UK prisons and beyond. Overall, combating radical ideas and violent Islamist extremism in prisons will stem the security threat this development poses, not only to the security and social cohesion in the United Kingdom in particular, but also to the global community in general. The study recommended that prisons in the UK and elsewhere

should be maximised as environments for educational and human development platforms of inmates. It is argued that if Islamist radicals are leveraging prisons to recruit vulnerable inmates, then the UK government and governments of other nations could do better by leveraging correctional environments to educate inmates for human development purposes and thereby build their psychological and mental capacities against the poisonous ideologies being proliferated by Islamist radicals behind bars.

Key words: Radicalisation, Extremism, Islamism, Prison and Terrorism.

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CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This study seeks to examine the phenomenon of radicalisation and violent extremism within prisons in the United Kingdom (UK). It analyses the causes, patterns, and trajectories of radicalisation in prisons in the United Kingdom and their implications for terrorism within the UK and beyond. As Hamm (2013) noted, although prisoner radicalisation is currently a matter of grave concern, it is actually a very old issue with consequences that can be astonishingly different in their outcomes. Prisoner radicalisation is best described as a double-edged sword, capable of producing both positive and negative results. For example, some prison radicals have achieved great heights of public service as presidents and prime ministers, Nobel Peace Prize winners and leaders of national liberation movements (Hamm, 2013: 1). Others have committed unspeakable acts of terrorism and genocide. From Hamm's arguments, three factors are vital in analysing the determinant outcomes of individuals who are locked behind bars: the time they spent in prison, what influenced their mind while they were in custody and their decision-making power over their environmental and mental encounters.

Due to its relevance to this study, the description of radicalisation in prisons as stated by Hamm (2013: 43) is adopted. Hamm sees prison radicalisation as the process by which inmates adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes. Hamm (2013) further argued that researchers had little interest in this matter until after the 9/11 attacks, and central to this development was the discovery of an Al-Qaeda training manual entitled "*Military Studies in the Jihad Holy War against the Tyrants*", seized during a 2000 police raid in a safe house in Manchester, England. Known in intelligence circles as "the Manchester document", the manual identified Western prisoners as candidates for conversion to Islam because they may harbour hostility toward their governments. Moreover, prisons had certainly become a matter of interest to Al-Qaeda. For instance, during a September 2000

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interview on an Arab-language television station, Osama bin Laden issued a call for jihad to release the "brothers inside jail everywhere" (Hamm, 2013: 43).

The concepts of radicalisation and violent extremism have become sensitive in connection with Islamist-motivated terrorism. Radicalisation is understood as a growing readiness to pursue and support far-reaching changes in society that conflict with or pose a direct threat to the existing order. A radical is understood as a person harbouring a deep-felt desire for fundamental socio-political changes (Nielsen-Dalgaard, 2010:798). For the purposes of this research, which examines the development of radicalisation and violent extremist ideas with reference to prisons in the United Kingdom, the study considers violent extremism as a vocal opposition to fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs (Ministry of Justice, 2016).

It is important to understand that the concept of radicalisation has varying descriptions among academics and practitioners (The European Commission, 2008; Schmid, 2013; Chris, 2016; Acheson, 2016 and 2020). This study considers radicalisation as socialisation to extremism, which can manifest itself in the perpetration of acts of terrorism (The European Commission, 2008). It is important to note that both violent extremism and radicalisation are processes of socialisation. In other words, violent extremism and radicalisation require an individual submitting to an ideological orientation with time, usually connected to an extreme belief system that is based on specific set of ideologies. This implies that violent extremist ideas and radicalism are not forced on an individual or a sudden event; neither do they happen in a vacuum. It takes time and processes before its actual manifestation.

The phenomenon of radicalisation and violent extremism in European countries, with reference to the United Kingdom, has manifested itself in a series of terrorist attacks and extremist activities in recent times. However, measures taken to combat this transnational insurgency have

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made it more difficult for extremist groups to recruit through mosques, and so Islamist recruiters behind bars take advantage of prison environments as a viable space to recruit new members (Ahmed, 2015). Meanwhile, prisons are meant to serve as incubators of peaceful change and transformation of inmates, yet they have played an enormous role in the narratives of radical and militant movements in modern times (Neumann, 2010:7). For example, the cases of Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman, and Khairi Saadallah are examples of how prisons in the United Kingdom have been utilised by radical Islamists in the recruitment and radicalisation of new recruits who embraced their ideologies behind bars (Dunleavy, 2020; Christian, 2020; O'Gara, 2021). In November 2019, February 2020 and June 2020, Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman and Khairi Saadallah respectively were newly released prisoners who completed their jail times at different UK prisons. Upon their release, they all proceeded to perpetrate deadly terror attacks that led to the deaths of several people in the United Kingdom. Considering these cases, the spread of extreme Islamist ideologies in prison has increasingly become a concern to the UK government. Similarly, understanding the distinction between Islam, or any other religion, and extremist ideologies that use Islamic religion for promoting violence and hatred has become crucial in tackling prison radicalisation (Ahmed, 2015: 2).

Historically, prisons have served as incubators of extreme ideas, and jihadists would not be the first to infiltrate and recruit from prisons. Right-wing extremist groups, including Posse Comitatus, the Order, Aryan Nations and various militia movements were formed or recruited from prison populations. Prisoners form a captive audience and often exhibit many characteristics that render them vulnerable to radicalisation, including alienation, antisocial attitudes, cultural disillusionment, social isolation, and violent tendencies. Moreover, prisoners may be forced to join gangs in prison for the purpose of protection and giving extremists another opportunity to exert influence. Jihadists have adopted the efforts of other domestic extremist groups to advance their objectives in prisons (Ahmed, 2015).

For instance, a study conducted by Basra et al (2016:3) found that 57% of individuals in their database (45 out of 79 profiles) had been incarcerated prior to their radicalisation, with sentences

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ranging from one month to over ten years, for various offences from petty to violent crime. More significantly, at least 27% of those who spent time in prison (12 out of 45 profiles) became radicalised there, although the process often continued and intensified after their release. Basra et al (2016) further underscore the significance of prisons regarding extremists or radicalisers, by stating that prisons are places of vulnerability where extremists can find numerous "angry young men" who are "ripe" for radicalisation; they bring together criminals and terrorists and therefore create opportunities for networking and "skills transfers"; and lastly, they often leave inmates with few opportunities to re-integrate into society (Basra et al, 2016).

Many known European terrorists have a history of petty crime that landed them in prison, and spending time in prisons often provided seminal experiences on their path to radicalisation. Prisoners often come under the influence of radical Islamists and eventually form lasting bonds with terrorist networks (Butler, 2015). It is noted that radicalisation in prisons has been allowed to spread and entrench itself under the noses of European politicians and law enforcement professionals. As reported by right-wing publication Breitbart, "Muslim extremists run prison blocks according to their own Sharia law, even non-Muslim inmates are forced to obey laws set by Islamist inmates" (Edmunds, 2016).

Therefore, the tendency of the prison services in the UK today to use incarceration of Islamic terrorists as a key counter-terror measure may produce, as an unintended consequence, even more radicalisation of imprisoned youth. Experience shows that these terrorists do not stop being terrorists simply because they are imprisoned; rather, they continue to view themselves as soldiers in a divine war against the infidels, whether in or out of prison. Furthermore, prisons' personnel are at a great risk because these Islamic terrorists who regard themselves as fighting a holy war view them as antagonists. With this understanding, prison professionals must become educated in this worldview and the attack tactics of terrorists (Vogt, 2015).

Additionally, Roy (2007) argues that the Western-based Islamic terrorists are not the militant vanguard of the Muslim community; they are a lost generation, unmoored from traditional

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societies and cultures, frustrated by a Western society that does not meet their expectations and that their vision of a global umma (a community of Muslim believers, bound together with a common purpose to worship Allah and with a common goal to advance the cause of Islam, their nationality notwithstanding) is both a mirror of and a form of revenge against the globalisation that has made them what they are. He further claims that Al-Qaeda and consorts offer a narrative of revolt and violence that appeals to an unmoored youth and gives a religious and political dimension to youth revolt that could have been expressed in other forms of violence. Roy concludes that it is not by chance that jails in the West seem to be as much recruiting grounds as mosques (Roy, 2007: 60).

On a different but related note, Vidino (2015) analyses the development of Islamism in European countries from immigration perspectives and intolerance of Europeans to understand and accommodate Islam. Vidino argues that the migration development in Europe and Muslim assimilation on the continent has a significant trigger for Islamism in the region. He contends that the foundation of Islamists in European countries, without the exception of the United Kingdom, relates to migration and intolerance of some Europeans towards Islam. In his claim, the new Muslim presence in Europe has created some of the problems that often come with any large immigration wave: financial difficulties for the newcomers and tensions with the native population. While some of these issues are common to other immigrant groups in Europe, others are unquestionably peculiar to Muslim communities. He further argues that many of the tensions that have arisen around the Muslim presence in Europe over the last decades have clear religious undertones. Advancing his argument, Vidino notes that parts of the tensions between Europe and the Muslim communities are due to the fear, ignorance, and intolerance of some Europeans towards Islam or, in many cases, any religion. He further indicates another crucial factor that is generating tensions within the European societies, and that is the presence of Islamism or what is known as political Islam (Vidino, 2015).

Similarly, security analysts in Europe are of the opinion that Western foreign policy plays a critical driving role in the development of radicalisation, violent extremism, and terror actions in

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European countries in general and the UK in particular. For instance, Hewitt (2017) argues that there is an undeniable connection between British foreign policy and the emergence of terror attacks in the United Kingdom. In his argument, Hewitt refers to the speech of Jeremy Corbyn (the former UK Labour Party's leader), presented after the Manchester terror incidence (that led to the death of 22 people and maiming of others), that the occurrence of terror acts in Britain is connected to the wars the UK has supported or fought in other countries such as Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. Emphasising his argument, Steve Hewitt claims that even those who are charged with defending the UK could not shy from the fact that British foreign policy does play a significant role in motivating terrorism in the region. He concluded that "They also speak of foreign policy as a driver of grievance, serving as a recruiter for extremists looking for followers." This also justifies the choice of UK prisons as case study for this research.

The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence at King's College, London (Neumann, 2010) examined evidence from 15 countries about how people could be radicalised or reformed in prison. The report pointed out that prisons could play both positive and negative roles in tackling problems of radicalisation and terrorism, besides being places of vulnerability. It was said that prisons were breeding grounds for radicalisation, as they provided near-perfect conditions for radical ideologies to flourish. This is because prisons are places of vulnerability, which produce identity-seekers, protection-seekers, and rebels in greater numbers than other environments. Prisons therefore become spaces where radical and religiously framed ideologies can flourish. This is further enabled by prison conditions such as overcrowding and under-staffing (Neumann, 2010: 2). While the full extent of this problem remains unclear as far as prisons in the UK are concerned, the potential for radicalisation behind bars in this region is evident with instances of terror attacks that are associated with perpetrators while still in custody being significant. However, this is not studied enough in ways that inform policy responses, and this in many ways provides some justification for this study.

Writing in *Time Magazine*, David von Drehle (2015) listed several Europeans who have gone to Syria and Iraq to fight alongside the Islamic State. At least 600 British citizens had gone to Syria

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and Iraq by that time. In the British government's counter-extremism strategy report, published in October 2015, the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, pointed to the threat posed by extremism and argued for the need to confront radical extremism. He pointed to various forms of extremism and called the fight against Islamist extremism "one of the great struggles of our generation," which must not be handled with kid gloves (HM Government, 2016:5). Similarly, in January 2016, David Cameron said that prisons should be places where people were deradicalised, not made worse. In the words of Cameron, "it is very disturbing that when people are in our care and when the state is looking after them, on some occasions, they have been radicalised because of what they have heard in prison either from other prisoners, or on occasion from visiting imams" (Grimwood, 2016). He concluded that this situation must be sorted out. In another speech in February 2016, this time on prison reform, David Cameron suggested that a new approach might be needed to deal with prisoners identified as extremists or who are vulnerable to extremism (ibid).

Equally, Edmunds in *Breitbart News*, reported on the challenges of prison radicalisation in British prisons with the instance of Islamic convert Jordan Horner, who took the Islamic name Jamaal Uddin, and how he converted others to Islam while serving a term, a rite which took place in the presence of prison officers who were powerless to intervene, yet argued that they were not complacent regarding the likely risks that Islamist extremism poses to their prisons (Edmunds, 2016).

Similarly, a 2017 report by the Office for Security and Counterterrorism in London on terrorism/ extremism cases, arrests and charges in the UK confirmed that 2017 saw the highest number of terrorism-related arrests (304) in any financial year on record since the data collection began in September 2001. The report stated an increase of 18% to the 258 arrests in the previous year. This includes the 12 arrests made in connection with the attack on Westminster Bridge and Westminster Palace on 22 March 2017. Out of the 304 arrests relating to terrorism-related offences in that year, 108 (36%) resulted in a charge, out of which 91 (84%) were charged with terrorism-related offences, while 100 (33%) were released without charge, 88 (29%) were

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released on bail pending further investigation, and 8 (3%) faced alternative action. Also, since 11 September 2001 (when the data collection began), 68% of charges have been terrorism related. Amongst the 91 persons charged with a terrorism-related offence by March 2017, as at the time of data provision to the Home Office (18 April 2017), 33 had been prosecuted, 31 had been found guilty, and a further 53 were awaiting prosecution. That same year, arrests for international terrorism accounted for most of all arrests (75%), and arrests for domestic terrorism accounted for 16% of all arrests (up from 4% in the year ending March 2016).

More significantly, a government-ordered review conducted in 2016 concluded that Islamist extremism is a growing problem within jails in the United Kingdom, with evidence of offenders advocating support for Islamic State and "charismatic" prisoners acting as "self-styled emirs" to radicalise other inmates (Ministry of Justice, 2016). With reference to Sam Gyimah, a former UK prisons minister, Smith (2017) argued that extremism is a danger to society and threat to public safety; it is right that we come together to bolster our response to the threats posed by radicalisation behind bars and give our hardworking staff the skills and knowledge they need to keep our prisons and communities safe.

From the foregoing, it is significant not only to study the growing trends of radicalisation towards violent extremism in UK prisons, but also to study the link between these radicalisations and terrorism in the UK and beyond.

1.2. Problem statement

The United Kingdom has witnessed the emergence of Islamists who have spent a period of jail time and made effort to influence other inmates with their radical ideology. Importantly, despite the strategic role prisons are meant to play in bringing about a positive change of attitude in inmates and rehabilitating lawbreakers and people convicted of crimes in UK societies, in recent years, there has been a growing spread of extreme Islamist ideologies in prisons in the United Kingdom. In the same vein, with instances of post-jail terror incidences in the UK in recent times, it has been observed that there is a connection between radicalisation in prisons and

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radical ideology that is conducive to terrorist actions. According to Lizzie Dearden (a UK Home Affairs Security Correspondent), more than 260 terrorist prisoners have been released from the UK prisons since the Islamic State declared its "caliphate" in 2014, and there are 228 people currently in prisons in the UK for terror-related offences, of which 82% are radical Islamists, 13% are far-right extremists and 6% belong to "other" (Dearden, 2018). In addition, Dearden, referencing a report from the UK Ministry of Justice, noted that no less than 700 prisoners are being managed under a counter-terrorism specialist case management process. He also reports that a UK prison officer stressed that the figure from the UK Ministry of Justice does not come anywhere near the real number of radical extremists inside prisons in the UK (Dearden, 2018). Similarly, a review report commissioned by the UK government in 2015 on Islamist extremism in prisons, probation and youth justice noted that Islamist radicalisation behind bars is a growing problem (Dearden, 2018).

Further, the United Kingdom prison system is expected to provide an environment for rehabilitation and reformation of inmates and their eventual reintegration into normal society, but paradoxically, the system is also contributing to inmates' radicalisation and exposing them to extremist ideologies that ultimately lead them to engage in terror activities before and upon their release. Despite this recognition, the subject of prison radicalisation in the United Kingdom is yet to be fully explored and remains an understudied area of academic research. More importantly, even though scholars (such as Schmid, 2013; Ganor, 2002; Solomon, 2016; Hunter, 2017; Rapoport, 2004 and others) have expressed their opinions on the themes and concepts relating to terrorism, insurgency, radicalisation and deradicalisation, violent extremism, criminality and jihadism nexus, the amount and quality of empirical research on radicalisation and violent extremism within European correctional facilities, particularly with reference to the UK prison environments, is inadequate.

Importantly, irrespective of the views of scholars (such as Liebling & Maruna, 2007, Spalek, 2011; Bryans, 2014; Acheson, 2016; Butler, 2017; Dunleavy, 2020; Basra & Neumann, 2020;) on the discourse around prisons, imprisonment, prisoners and correctional management

challenges in the United Kingdom, less attention has been paid to the contributory roles played by correctional environments to the development of Islamist radical orientation and facilitation of extremist behaviours of inmates in the United Kingdom, which have led and could further lead to terror actions within and outside jails in the country. In addition, considering the high level of threat that Islamist radicalisation behind bars poses to the security and peace of the United Kingdom and the global community in general, investigating this development from an empirical standpoint is undoubtedly and significantly required.

By the same token, even though the government of the UK has initiated various responses to combat the menace of radical behaviours within and outside jails in the country, none of the authors have critically examined and investigated the implications of these responses. Hence, through rigorous empirical investigation, this study attempted to fill these gaps by exploring prisoners' radicalisation and violent extremism with a particular focus on the United Kingdom prison system. This is particularly undertaken by examining the puzzle of why and how prison environments in the United Kingdom have been contributing to the development of radical and extremist behaviours of its inmates as well as analysing the factors that are responsible for ineffectiveness of the UK deradicalisation programmes and lessons for other jurisdictions in this regard. In addition, the study brought to bear the missing links in the UK government's responses to the challenges of Islamist radicalism and the impacts of these responses on global security and social cohesion in the United Kingdom.

1.3. Research objectives

The central focus of this research is to examine the problem of radicalisation and violent extremism within prisons in the United Kingdom, and its specific objectives are as follows:

1.   To examine why some prisoners in the UK have been radicalised during their custodial sentence

2.   To critically investigate the factors responsible for the spread of radical ideology and violent extremism in British prisons

3. To analyse the ways and means through which this extremism and radicalisation takes place in UK prisons

4. To establish links, if any, between the UK government's efforts to combat terror and the problem of radicalisation in UK prisons

5. To evaluate the UK government's efforts in combating radicalisation and violent extremism in its prisons

6. To examine lessons other countries could learn from the UK counter-radicalisation policies and their implications for social cohesion in the United Kingdom

1.4. Research questions

Arising from the research problem and objectives outlined above, this study aims to provide answers to the following questions:

1. Why do some inmates embrace radical ideology in British prisons while others do not?

2. What are the causes and nature of radicalisation in UK prisons?

3. How does radicalisation take place in UK prisons, and how do prison environments in the UK foster radicalisation and violent extremism?

4. Are there links between the UK government's war against terrorism and the problem of radicalisation in UK prisons?

5. How is the UK government responding to the challenges of radicalisation in its prisons and what have the initial outcomes of these responses been?

6. What are the lessons of the findings of this study for other countries and what implications do the UK counter-radicalisation policies have on social cohesion in the UK?

1.5. Research methodology

This study employed a qualitative research method. As Creswell (2013) states, the point of qualitative research is to understand a particular social situation, event, role, group, or interaction. Likewise, Miles and Huberman (1994) assert that qualitative research is mainly an investigative system, whereby the researcher understands a social phenomenon by contrasting, replicating, classifying, cataloguing, and comparing the object of study. Within the context of this study, the inclination of the qualitative methodological approach is employed to establish the understanding of the problem of radicalisation and violent extremism within prisons in the United Kingdom and examine why some prisoners in the UK have been radicalised during their custodial sentence. This also includes evaluating the UK government's efforts in combating radicalisation and violent extremism behind bars.

Moreover, the qualitative methodological approach enabled the researcher to explore the problem of radicalisation and violent extremism within prisons in the United Kingdom with the capacity to critically examine this phenomenon in a characteristic setting. With the goal of answering the research inquiries of the study, a qualitative approach for data collection and investigation was embraced. In this direction, it is important to state that the research questions examined in the study are settled in social and political environments that could not be easily assessed, even as they are involved in the collection of data through the recording of events, key informant interviews and in-depth unstructured interviews (Isiugo-Abanihe, 2002: 54).

Further, qualitative research focuses on obtaining a truthful description of how a problem or solution is experienced by those who lived it. In the context of this study, the qualitative research method explains the research questions because the questions are deeply rooted in the social and political fabrics that cannot be quantified but require data-gathering through records of events and in-depth interviews (IDI), where interviewees would be able to participate and express their understanding of events freely without intimidation or limitation. By and large, qualitative research methodology gives room to comprehend the social and political developments in the

context of radicalism and violent extremist behaviours of inmates in the United Kingdom and also sheds light regarding the UK government's counter-radicalisation efforts to combat the upstream of this phenomenon within and outside its prison systems.

1.5.1. Research design

Due to the nature of the research questions of this study, a descriptive and explanatory case study design was adopted. A case study adds to a theoretical and empirical field through analysing each empirical case separately in a qualitative manner. Consequently, such a design has the function to supplement more generalised studies and contribute specific theoretical and empirical explanatory value to the study under investigation. It is important to note that findings of a case study research are generally applicable to a certain context, due to the specificity of the theoretical approach merged with the case study. Therefore, it is important to understand the case studies to a certain extent before drawing a generalised conclusion (Yin, 2014). A case study design addresses the questions of "what" and "why" on the rationale behind some inmates' embrace of radical ideology in prisons in the United Kingdom, while others do not, as well as the causes and nature of radicalisation in United Kingdom prisons.

The descriptive case study design was utilised to logically link and establishes the UK government's efforts to combat terror in the country and the problem of radicalisation in its prisons along its efforts in combating radicalisation and violent extremism in its prisons. The case study design delved deeper into an in-depth investigation of the inconspicuous subtleties underlying them than scanty records regarding these developments. Therefore, this requires an interpretation of these developments, with a view to foregrounding hitherto ignored outcomes. This is indispensable in the light of the lessons learned from the UK counter-radicalisation policies and their implications on global security in general.

The explanatory case study design is used to connect ideas to understand cause and effect relating to a particular phenomenon (Fisher & Zivian, 2004). It is a research design employed across the social science disciplines and applicable where the number of variables far outstrips

the number of data points. The design is used to investigate the uniqueness of cases, with the aim of answering the "how" questions. According to Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010), the explanatory case study design presents data-bearing cause–effect relationships, explaining how events happened and how they are connected to formulate a theory. The explanatory case study design was similarly used to handle more definitive research inquiries on how radicalisation takes place behind bars in the United Kingdom, how prison environments in the UK foster radicalisation and violent extremism and how the UK government is responding to the challenges of radicalisation in its prisons. This design considered the premise of the links between the UK government's war against terrorism and the problem of radicalisation in UK prisons. It also elicited insights into the implications on security in the UK and in other jurisdictions. In this study, the explanatory case study design was utilised to examine and analyse how radicalisation takes place behind bars in the United Kingdom and how prison environments in the country foster radicalisation and violent extremist behaviours, using secondary and primary sources like official records, reports, and published information.

In sum, the case study research design was utilised to handle in-depth research questions on the problem of radicalisation and violent extremism within prisons in the United Kingdom and to shape the premise of further research.

1.5.2. Methods of data collection

1.5.2.1 Primary data

The interview instrument (semi-structured) was used to collect primary data for this study. It employed open-ended and semi-structured interview questions to capture the understanding of research participants (Kvale, 1996; Elliot & Timulak, 2005). The key-person in-depth interview or one-on-one interview method (Johnson 2001) was considered the most appropriate for this study to gain comprehensive responses and information from prison officials in four prisons run by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Services (HMPPS), namely Strangeways, Whitemoor, Belmarsh, and Frankland. The sample frame also includes two non-governmental organisations

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(NGOs) working with prisons and prisoners in the United Kingdom, namely (Prison Education Trust and Prison Learning Alliance), as well as five academic experts on radicalisation, violent extremism, and prison studies in the United Kingdom. In total, the study had 12 respondents who expressed themselves freely without any hindrance during the interviews. Hence, responses and interactions flowed easily between the interviewer and interviewees.

The fieldwork period took place in the United Kingdom and was originally divided into seven main phases:

Stage 1: Contact and key-person in-depth interviews with NGOs, Jan–Feb 2020

Stage 2: Key-person in-depth interviews with academic experts, March–April 2020

Stage 3: Key-person in-depth interviews inside Strangeways prison, April–May 2020

Stage 4: Key-person in-depth interviews inside Whitemoor prison, May–June 2020

Stage 5: Key-person in-depth interviews inside Frankland prison, June–July 2020

Stage 6: Key-person in-depth interviews in Belmarsh prison, July–August 2020

Stage 7: Data analysis and discussion, August–October 2020

However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the fieldwork activities from stage 3 to stage 6 could not be carried out as originally planned. These were suspended due to the United Kingdom's government restrictions placed on accessing prisons, prisoners, and prison officials during the Covid-19 pandemic. To make up for this, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with outside experts who work directly with different prisons, including ex-prison officials, and other stakeholders whose professional experiences involved prisons, prisoners, violent extremism, radicalism, and penal systems in the United Kingdom. Although it was difficult to get hold of these individuals during this period, the snowball technique was helpful in getting these respondents who were used to replace the number of prisoners originally planned in the four prisons studied.

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1.5.2.2 Secondary data

Secondary information sources included published books, journal articles, the UK government's reports, think tanks' analyses, and civil society organisations' reports on prison services in the UK. Also, publications by international NGOs such as the Counter Extremism Project, Terrorism Research Initiative, Investigative Project on Terrorism, Perspectives on Terrorism, the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR) and International Centre on Counterterrorism (ICCT). Relevant information was also gathered from UK newspapers such as *The Guardian, The Independent, Times Magazine,* and other international online materials relevant to the study.

1.5.3. Data analysis

The interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. Afterwards, the transcripts were coded using NQvivo8 software for qualitative analysis, where appropriate direct quotations from the interviewees were used to substantiate the line of arguments that emerged from the data. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data collected for this research. This is because thematic analysis' broad methodological framing is tied to how "individuals make meaning of their understanding of events, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings" (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 81). This approach is relevant to this study as it examined the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism within prisons in the United Kingdom. The six phases of thematic analysis espoused by Braun and Clarke (2006: 87) were utilised in the data analysis phase of the study. These are getting familiarised with the data, coding the dataset, generating themes, reviewing the themes, defining and naming the themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 87).

1.6. Justification for the study

This study is timely because of the increasing number of terrorist operations (both successful and foiled attacks) linked to Islamists and Islamic State sympathisers in Europe. From 2015 to 2020, terror attacks became a common occurrence in European countries such as England, France,

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Belgium, Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands. It has been found out that most of these terror actors had jail experience before attacks (Bryans, 2014; Salim, 2018; Stewart, 2018). These terror actors in the UK and other European countries include the English-born Khalid Moshood (Dunleavy, 2017), Sudesh Amman (England), Usman Khan (England), Omar El Hussein (France), Benjamin Herman (Belgium), Sergo P. (Austria), and Bilal Taghi (France), just to mention a few (Basra and Neumann, 2020: 22). More importantly, several stories of arrested terrorists confirm that their path into terror activities started through encounters they had with Islamist inmates while imprisoned. In other words, the prison environment has not only been used by Islamic extremists to radicalise other prisoners, but it has also become a breeding ground for recruitment of other prisoners to advance terrorist ideological objectives in European countries, particularly in the UK. As a result, the UK has witnessed the emergence of jihadists such as: Mohammed Emwazi ("Jihadi John"), Salman Ramadan Abedi (the Manchester Suicide Bomber), Abu Rumaysah (the new Jihadi John), Michael Adebolajo (convicted in the brutal murder of 25-year-old British soldier, Lee Rigby) Khuram Shazad, Butt Rachid, and Youssef Zaghba (London Bridge and London Market terrorists). Others include Junead Khan, Richard Dart, Rhul Amin, Assad Uzzaman, Syed Choudoury, as well as Anjem Choudary, who has spent the better part of 20 years preaching, proselytising, and recruiting individuals to a radical form of Islam that encourages jihad as a necessary tenet of the faith. Many of these individuals are currently serving second jail terms in British prisons.

As argued by Allen and Harding (2021), the general trend from around the 1990s is a decrease in the number of people killed due to terrorism (including Islamist-motivated terrorism). However, in 2005 and 2017, there were higher average deaths recorded. In 2017, three separate attacks that resulted to multiple deaths: Westminster Bridge and Palace (6 deaths), Manchester Arena (23 deaths) and London Bridge (11 deaths) (Allen and Harding, 2021). In other words, Islamist actions in the UK in 2017 resulted in the loss of lives of more than 36 people at the hands of terrorists, including incidents in Manchester and London.

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The UK threat level currently stands at "severe", meaning that an attack is "highly likely". The evolving threat of lone-wolf attacks by those inspired by the propaganda of groups such as Islamic State, British First and National Action presents an entirely new challenge for those tasked with protecting the UK population. In terms of response, the UK government has pledged to spend an extra £2.5 billion on security intelligence measures and introduce new legislation to prevent terrorism (Allen and Harding, 2021). The question remains, however, of how effective these budgetary and legal measures as well as counter-terrorism programmes are in dealing with radicalisation in the prisons.

Furthermore, prison radicalisation has consequently led and could further lead to some UK prisoners to participating or engaging in planning and carrying out future terror attacks. Terrorist radicalisers have characterised the prison environment as societal resentment to inmates, which has led, directly and indirectly, to deepening grievances, frustrations, and anger of these inmates against their communities. Therefore, having a depth of understanding of prison radicalisation in the UK will help to provide insights as well as frameworks for policymakers on how to solve the problem of recruitment of inmates into extremism. Also, understanding radicalisation of inmates with terror capability in the UK will invariably assist to curb the spread of violent ideology inside the British prisons. Combating prison radicalisation and extremism will help to stop the security threat that this development poses, not only to the security of the UK, but also of the global community in general.

1.7. Limitations of the study

This study had several limitations. First, it is only bringing a perspective to prison research as far as radicalism within correctional environments in the UK is concerned. Second, it is a small, non-obtrusive doctoral study limited to a small sample of key-person actors as respondents, limited by the time and money constrains of postgraduate studies. In essence, with a wider latitude and budget to conduct a bigger investigation on this topic, it would have been more revealing to conduct interviews with hundreds of prisoners, prison governors and lower-cadre

prison staff across HMPPS. This includes a quasi-experimental or experimental test of some anti-radicalisation initiatives as well. Instead, the study only examined the policy dimension of prison administration in the UK in the context of the development of Islamist radicalism and extremism of inmates, and its methodological approach is equally less obtrusive.

The focus of the study also connects with conducting interviews with those in leadership positions in prison management and other stakeholders whose operations connect with correctional services in the UK. Regarding responses from interviewees, the researcher also recognises and understands that interviewees might be biased in their responses and that he is limited in what research respondents are able or willing to share and the depth of their analyses on the subject.

Furthermore, due to Covid-19 disruptions, some of the fieldwork activities could not be carried out as originally planned. The initial data collection plans had to be suspended due to restrictions placed on accessing prisons in the United Kingdom. However, the researcher alternatively gathered data by conducting interviews with outside experts who work directly with different prisons, including ex-prison officials, and other stakeholders whose work is focused on prisons and penal systems in the United Kingdom.

1.8. Structure of chapters

This study is organised into six chapters. Chapter one provides the background to the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives, methodology, as well as justification for the study. Chapter two reviews related literatures that conceptualise key concepts and a theoretical framework. Chapter three investigates the character of Islamists behind bars as well as why and how some inmates embrace radical ideology and violent extremist orientation in British prisons. Chapter four examines the UK government responses to prison radicalisation and outcomes of responses, and chapter five examines implications of UK government policies and lesson learned on global security. The final chapter presents the conclusion of study and makes recommendations.

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Chapter one: Chapter one of the study presents an overview of the study. It gives a brief introduction of the phenomenon of radicalisation and violent extremism challenges as it relates to Europe, particularly to the management of prisons and prisoners in the United Kingdom. The chapter equally indicates the problem statement of the study, research questions, objectives, methodology, limitation, and justification for study.

Chapter two: The second chapter of this study adopts a conceptual review of literature review within a thematic framework in line with the objectives of the study. It also employs two relevant theories as bases of analysis for its theoretical framework. A thematic method of literature review is organised around a topic or theme to explain the direction of the study under investigation. A thematic method of literature review is therefore maximised to shed light on the opinions of different scholars and progressively clarify specific concepts of the study such as terrorism, radicalisation, Islamism, imprisonment, violent extremism etc. Due to the trans-disciplinary nature of the study and the task of understanding and explaining the challenges of radicalisation and extremism behind bars, the study goes beyond the task of the usage of a single theory approach to explain the focus of the study under investigation.

Chapter three: Chapter three of the study investigated the character of radical Islamists behind bars and analyses reasons and channels through which some inmates embrace radical ideology and violent extremist orientation while others do not. Among other things, the chapter shed light on why and how radicalisation occurs behind bars in the UK. Significantly, the chapter analysed the connection between radicalisation in prisons in the UK and Islamist motivated terror attacks in the country. More importantly, this chapter attempts to explain the role that religious extremism plays in the exposure of inmates to violent extremist ideology as well as extremist religious belief system and how extremist recruiters often twist religious contents in the recruitment process of new recruits, turning them from ordinary convicted offenders into violent extremist radicals.

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Chapter four: This chapter deals with the UK government's responses and policies against prison radicalisation and extremist behaviours behind bars and the outcomes of these responses. It analyses how terror actions in the UK motivated the UK government to initiate programmes and measures that would strengthen the effort of prison establishments to confront the stem of violent extremist ideas behind bars and assist both terror offenders, radicalised inmates and vulnerable prisoners who might be susceptible to radical ideas via the influence of charismatic extremist inmates. Equally, the chapter examines among others the increased incidence of terror attacks in the UK with radical Islamist ideology behind bars and how this has pushed the UK government, parliament, and criminal justice agencies to discuss and reconsider the effectiveness of deradicalisation programmes in the country as well as efficacy of deradicalisation programmes within the country's prison establishments.

Chapter five: Chapter five sheds light on lessons learned from the UK government's responses to curb the upstream of radicalisation and violent extremism within and outside the country's prison establishments and the chapter advances this discussion by examining specific implications of the UK government policies on global security as well as communities in the UK.

Chapter six: The final chapter of the study presents the conclusion of the study and makes recommendations.

1.9. Ethical considerations

This is a high-risk study given its sensitive nature. Existing literature has established the awareness of ethical challenges related to this kind of research study (Beck & Konnert, 2007; Decker et al, 2011; Legerski & Bunnell, 2010). The ethical considerations of this study abide by the International Prisons Association (IPA) Code of Ethics. Significantly, participation in this study was voluntary and a consent form was prepared for interested and available participants to seek their permission to participate in the study. In addition, the privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of research participants were assured, and the participants were given the liberty

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to decline responses to questions they did not wish to answer. Also, the research participants remained anonymous in the reporting of the findings.

In terms of ethical approvals for the study, the Faculty of Humanities ethics approval protocols were followed. The research proposal was submitted to the Department of Political Sciences' Research Committee of the University of Pretoria to obtain ethical approval prior to the commencement of data collection. This fulfilled a part of the requirements for undertaking a doctoral research study that focuses on government institutions such as prisons, prison staff and other stakeholders whose operations connect with prisons and prisoner management in the United Kingdom.

In addition, the researcher initiated contact with host academics at Queen's University Belfast in the UK, who provided, among other things, guidelines that ensured that research participants in the UK were not exposed to any risk of physical or psychological harm. This is over and above all other ethical principles that stipulated that data gathered would be treated with utmost confidentiality and used for the purpose for which the research was conducted. In addition, a letter requesting permission to conduct interviews with officials such as prison staff and other stakeholders was collected from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria. In the same vein, a Letter of Consent from NGOs working with prisons in the UK was secured before the interviews were carried out. This research was conducted in a language understood by every research respondent. Deception was not used in any way to get information from them, and full consent of the respondents was sought and obtained prior to the interviews.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1. Introduction

Conducting a literature review is an essential obligation when undertaking any form of research, especially doctoral research. It serves as the basic responsibility a doctoral researcher has undertaken when conducting a Social Science-based study. Specifically, conducting a literature review helps a researcher not only to understand what work has been carried out on a particular research theme and who has done such work, but equally assists the researcher to measure, encapsulate, compare, contrast and correlate different scholarly books, research articles and other relevant sources that are directly related, up to date and relevant to what he/she studies. This is important to deepen the researcher's understanding on the subject under investigation (Kim, 2018). This will consequently assist the researcher to identify gaps in the research study and guide him/her on how to add his/her own perspectives as an addition to the body of knowledge on the subject under study. Importantly, reviewing of literature in a research study opens the researcher to understanding how previous studies have been carried out. In sum, a literature review is significant because it assists a researcher to create a sense of rapport with his/her audience or readers so they can see that the researcher has done his/her homework on the subject. In addition, it is a simple way to avoid unintentional plagiarism and helps the researcher to remain focused on the research direction (ibid).

In this regard, it is important to emphasise that there are different methods of conducting a literature review and not all these methods are suitable for every research study. In other words, although a literature review is meant to provide an overview synthesis of pertinent sources the researcher has explored, there are different approaches a researcher can adopt depending on the type of explanation guiding the study. For example, a literature review can take any of the following approaches: argumentative, integrative, methodological, systematic, theoretical, historical, or thematic form (Fink, 2014) which is also conceptual.

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For the purpose of this research, this study shall make use of thematic method of literature review that conceptualises relevant concepts that are central to the themes of the study. As Fink (2014) noted, a thematic or conceptual method of literature review is organised around a topic or theme to explain the direction of the study under investigation (Fink, 2014). In other words, this study leverages a thematic method of literature review to progressively clarify specific concepts of the study such as terrorism, radicalisation, Islamist extremism, Islamism, Islamic resurgence as well as imprisonment in Europe, with a specific focus on the United Kingdom.

2.1.1. Terrorism

One of the major challenges of terrorism as a concept is the fact that there is no consensus among scholars in the field of terrorism studies as to what terrorism specifically implies. One argument revolves around the notion that terrorism can be freedom to one individual or group or liberation struggle to another. In other words, what an individual or a group of people frames or agrees to be an act of terror is completely seen or explained by another group as a means of expressing themselves for freedom purpose, whether directly or indirectly. This makes the explanation of terrorism in a conceptual framing very problematic. Nevertheless, an attempt is made in this chapter to refer to some of the arguments of terrorism scholars and channel these arguments down to other concepts as this relates to the central focus of this study.

Scholars (such as Ganor, 2002; Rapoport, 2004; Schmid, 2013; Solomon, 2016) have attempted to discuss, define, redefine, refine, critique, and elucidate the concept of terrorism from different perspectives. Schmid (2004) looks at the concept of terrorism from a framework perspective and names five different frameworks along this line. He argues that terrorism has been and can be used sometimes as an instrument of political strategy; it is sometimes labelled by the state as an act of war or seen as a criminal offence or propagandistic means of communication by a non-state actor as well as being perpetrated in the name of religion to achieve a particular objective. The perspective of Ganor (2002) on terrorism as a concept is different from Schmid's. Ganor is displeased with the lack of consensus on terrorism's definition among terrorism scholars. Hence,

he proposes a potential definition, which is, "terrorism is the intentional use of, or threat to use, violence against civilians or against civilian targets, in order to attain political aims". In other words, Ganor's definition of terrorism strikes on three major elements, namely: (i) intentional use of threat or violence, (ii) civilians as targets of threat or violence and (iii) pursuit of political aims as motivation for threat and violence (Ganor, 2002).

Rapoport (2004) approaches the concept of terrorism from an evolutionary perspective. He enumerates the historical antecedents of modern terrorism, which he constructs as *"Four waves of terrorism"*. For Rapoport, a wave is a cycle of activity in each period, characterised by expansion and contraction phases. In his argument, modern terrorism involves four specific waves: first wave – anarchist (1880s–1920s), second wave – anti-colonial (1920s–1960s), third wave – new left wing (1960s–1990s) and the fourth wave – religious wave (1990s–present). The first wave was anarchist in nature and its characteristic features included slow political reform and declining legitimacies of monarchies in Europe. Its goal was based on revolutions and elimination of government oppression, targeting heads of states with assassinations, using dynamite as well as bank robberies as its tactics. Its decline came about by the aggressive state opposition and the outbreak of World War I. The second wave of terrorism was characterised with outbreak of nationalist movements between the 1920s and 1960s, the Versailles Peace Treaty and increased desire for self-determination. Its goals included elimination of colonial rule and creation of new states. Its targets included the military and police, and guerrilla warfare used as a tactic. Its decline came about with many countries gaining independence and the eventual withdrawal of colonial powers. The New Left Wing was the third wave between the 1960s and 1980, and this was orchestrated by Vietnam War and Cold War tensions. Its goals included elimination of the capitalist system with an increasing focus on the United States of America. Its tactics included hijackings, kidnappings and assassinations, and its decline came about with the end of Cold War. The fourth wave is the religious wave (1979–2020s). This wave started with the Iranian Revolution, new Islamic movements, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The wave's goals include creation of a global Islamic Caliphate, and this is targeted against the US,

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Israel, Europe, mass transportation systems and public venues using all kinds of attacks including suicide bombings, aircrafts and vehicles and other weapons.

Rapoport concludes that the wave model does not describe distinct phases, merely an evolution. He argues that each wave shows that the groups involved tried to learn from the previous development and evolved their tactics to reflect the evolution of counter-terrorism strategies enforced by the states (Rapoport, 2004). In his argument, the world is currently experiencing a fourth wave of terrorism, which is the religious wave. It can then be explained that the development of various terror attacks motivated by religious extremism—Islamist extremism in this case—is an indication of Rapoport's claim of the fourth wave of terror actions. What is not yet known is when this wave will be over and what type of wave of terrorism will follow.

Unlike Rapoport, Ramsay (2015) approaches the concept of terrorism from the perspective of three orthodox mainstream debates, which presume that terrorism: (i) has been defined, (ii) should not be defined, and (iii) can be defined. In the first debate, "terrorism has been defined", Ramsay argues that terrorism has been defined because it has several definitions—meaning terrorism means different things to different people. For Ramsay, the question is whether there could be a meaningful consensus definition among those who have defined terrorism. In the second debate, "terrorism should not be defined", Ramsay opines that the more we consider the areas in which the word terrorism is used, the less it seems that there is anything other than an incidental overlap between the concepts and problems that actually seem to be at stake. For Ramsay, it is ultimately the same "terrorism" we are concerned with in every case, and we risk creating more confusion than clarity. He concludes that terrorism possesses hollowness because while there do seem to be common denominators to definitions of terrorism, there are no obvious common denominators to terrorism as it is used. That is, while different phenomena, each bearing the label "terrorism", are likely to tend towards an incidental resemblance, they share no essential feature in common. Therefore, terrorism should not be defined.

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Besides the above orthodox debates on the concept of terrorism, Ramsay also mentions two other contrasting perspectives on terrorism: the first insists that the concept of terrorism is fundamentally unhelpful and should be abandoned altogether. This is because, terrorism is socially constructed. The second contrasting argument maintains that the problem of defining terrorism has more to do with inconsistency and double standards in the way the word is applied.

Meanwhile, Ogochukwu (2013) argues that terrorism is a contested concept that resists precise definition. Since the term is both elastic and emotionally powerful, it lends itself to subjective interpretation driven by political rather than analytical purpose. It is also difficult to distinguish terrorism from other forms of violence including guerrilla warfare or criminal activities. If terrorism is defined in terms of the intention behind the action, is it possible to know those intentions? What is the relationship between religion and terrorism, by non-combatants, for example? Are attacks on security targets an act of terror? These questions help to gain an understanding that a group such as the Islamic State is preoccupied with carrying out various degrees of attack on civilians, usually used by the powerful against the powerless. Advancing his explanation of terrorism, Ogochukwu (2013) argues that terrorism is the use of force to impact fear with a view to bringing about political, economic, or social change. In recent years, terrorism has been endemic in many nations of the world, including European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Germany, and even Russia. Ogochukwu (2013) further explained that the often-repeated phrase, "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter", is an extreme example of an essential contested concept, and its preacher uses it to polarise to an extent that renders it extremely difficult to return to normal politics.

Mahmood (2002), in his article, "Good Muslim, bad Muslim: A political perspective on culture and terrorism", looks at the concepts of terrorism and culture together. He bases his argument on terrorism in a historical and political context. Instead of looking at terrorism as a residue of a pre-modern culture in modern politics, Mahmood considers terrorism as a modern construction. In his argument, he looks at how the public erroneously connects Islam with terrorism, escalated by

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Media reports of September 11 terror attacks in the US, which consequently resulted in a war on terror. Mahmood's explanation of terrorism claims that it is a notion of what the people who regard themselves as modern consider it to be. Mahmood emphasises that terrorism has created the platform to turn a religious experience into a political category, differentiating "good Muslims" from "bad Muslims" rather than terrorists from civilians. He sees the development of religious-motivated terrorism—Islamist in this case—differently, not as a Clash of Civilization, as pointed by Samuel Huntington in his 1993 essay published in *World Politics* (where Islam is demonised in its entirety), but a clash within Islamic civilisation itself. In his words, "Some may object that I am presenting a caricature of what we read in the press. After all, is there not less talk about the clash of civilizations, and more about the clash inside Islamic civilization? Is that not the point of the articles I referred to earlier? Certainly, we are now told to distinguish between good Muslims and bad Muslims. Mind you, not between good and bad persons, nor between criminals and civic citizens, who both happen to be Muslims, but between good Muslims and bad Muslims. We are told that there is a fault line running through Islam, a line that separates moderate Islam, called "genuine Islam", from extremist political Islam. The terrorists of September 11, we are told, did not just hijack planes; they also hijacked Islam, meaning "genuine" Islam. In this case, there is a need to clarify, what is the connection between terrorism and a good Muslim and does an act of terror perpetrated by a Muslim makes such a person to be labelled a bad Muslim? What does Mahmood mean by "genuine Islam"? On terrorism, he concluded saying that terrorism is not a product or residue of a pre-modern culture in modern politics, but that it is a modern construction. Even when it harnesses one or another aspect of tradition and culture, the result is a modem ensemble at the service of a modern project".

Ganor's (2002) argument on terrorism starts with three questions: What is the enemy, who is the enemy and is one man's terrorist another man's freedom fighter? Ganor expresses his concern over the subject of terrorism and difficulties that exist among academics regarding its identification and disunity of its explanation. Irrespective of countless incidents of terror acts that happen across the globe, scholars are still finding it difficult to agree on what terrorism implies

in definitive terms. For Ganor, "it is wild to see and hear that after a long period of time, scholars are yet to have an agreed definition of terrorism" (Ganor, 2002: 287–288). Ganor states that most researchers tend to believe that an objective and internationally accepted definition of terrorism can never be agreed upon; after all, they say, "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." The question of who a terrorist is, according to this school of thought, depends entirely on the subjective outlook of the definer. He further argues that an objective definition of terrorism is not only possible but also indispensable to any serious attempt to combat terrorism. Ganor argues that a correct and objective definition of terrorism can be based upon accepted international laws and principles regarding what behaviors are permitted in conventional wars between nations. This normative principle relating to a state of war between two countries can be extended without difficulty to a conflict between an NGO and a state, Ganor stated. This extended version would thus differentiate between guerrilla warfare and terrorism (ibid).

Ganor (2002) disagrees with the claim that one man's freedom-fighting is another man's terrorism. He advances his argument by making a distinction between an act of terror and guerrilla warfare. The aims of terrorism and guerrilla warfare may well be identical, but they are distinguished from each other by the targets of their operations, Ganor emphasised. The guerrilla fighter's targets are military ones, while the terrorist deliberately targets civilians. According to Ganor, the level of threat and intensity that terrorism poses to the international community today requires an agreed definition. The challenge of terrorism nowadays forces us to look for an agreed-upon definition of terrorism. Therefore, the term terrorism, for Ganor, would be the deliberate use of (or threat to use) violence against civilians to attain political, ideological and religious aims. By this definition, a terrorist organisation can no longer claim to be "freedom fighters" because they are fighting for national liberation. Even if its declared goals are legitimate, Ganor concludes, any organisation that deliberately targets civilians is a terrorist organisation (ibid).

Crenshaw (1981) looks at the concept of terrorism from a sociological perspective. Her sociological argument is centred on the contagiousness of terrorism. She refers to the observed
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phenomenon that high levels of terror acts in one country often are associated with increased incidents of terrorism in neighbouring states in the region, whether by the same organisation, by "second-generation" groups, by foreign sympathisers and coalition partners, or simply by imitators (Crenshaw, 1981). This explanation further suggests that individuals adopt the attitudes or behaviours of others in the social network with whom they communicate. It explains that individual perceptions are influenced by the perceptions of individuals in their social or friendship network. This implies that the proximity of two actors in a social network is associated with the occurrence of interpersonal influence between those actors. In other words, social contagion tendency can motivate the behaviours and perceptions initiated by one member of a terror network and consequently serve as an influencer for others in the same network.

In another perspective, Crenshaw emphasises that members of terror groups receive trainings from other networks with which they share similar orientation or ideology. Communication through social networks usually assists members of terrorist groups to exchange information and opinions about their plans, targets, and operations within and outside a national boundary. More importantly, extensive collaborative arrangements, trans-border networks and personal relationships of trust between terrorist groups are key factors in explaining the contagiousness of terrorism. Crenshaw further explains that terrorist organisations frequently have direct physical contact with other terrorist groups and with foreign countries. Collaboration extends to buying weapons, finding asylum, obtaining passports and false documents, acquiring funds, and sometimes rendering assistance in the planning and execution of terrorist attacks. It means that transnational links among groups with shared aims make terrorism in one state likely to lead to terrorism in nearby states.

The terrorist threat is growing in Africa, with the likes of Al Shabaab, Ansar Dine and Boko Haram exploiting Africa's vulnerabilities—whether ungoverned spaces or corrupt officials—to expand their operations. At the same time, traditional responses to terrorism, with their primarily military focus and privileging of the state, seem incapable of stopping this menace. Solomon (2015) examines the subject of terrorism, not from definitive perspectives or otherwise, but from

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a political operational and group dimension. He bases his argument within the context of terror grouping with religious fundamentalism in Africa. These include groups such as Al Shabaab, Ansar Dine and Boko Haram. According to Solomon, the terrorist threat that is growing in Africa, with the likes of Al Shabaab, Ansar Dine and Boko Haram exploiting Africa's vulnerabilities—whether ungoverned spaces or corrupt officials—to expand their operations. At the same time, traditional responses to terrorism, with military confrontation and privileging of the state, seem incapable of stopping this menace. This is evident in the fact that there are currently three terrorist attacks per day on the continent. To compound matters further, while these various terrorist organisations are cooperating, little coordination is taking place among the various African states despite the existence of the African Union and its counter-terrorist regime. Despite their efforts, external players like the United States' African Command have in many ways exacerbated the problem on account of their insufficient knowledge of the local context which is driving these insurgencies. He calls for a holistic approach with greater emphasis on development and improved governance, explaining both the limitations of current counter-terrorist strategies and how these strategies might be improved.

In the same vein, Solomon (2016) expresses his view on the origins, military triumphs, success in securing new recruits and organisational structure of the Islamic State. Solomon analyses the origin and spread of the terrorist group from its original base in Iraq and Syria, until it became a global phenomenon with 17 regional affiliates from Indonesia to Nigeria and sleeper cells in at least 60 countries, with known atrocities such as the Paris attacks. He explores the group's organisational structure, driven ideology, and implications for Western efforts to attack the leadership of the group. He identifies the way ISIS grew by swiftly adapting its military strategy, developing creative forms of funding and efforts to win the hearts and minds of locals. He equally indicates the competing individual national interests between the Western military alliance and local partners and how this unfortunately strengthened the Islamic State in its terror campaigns.

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Gabriel (2018) views the subject of terrorism as a current global epidemic challenge that constitutes insecurity and disturbance to peaceful coexistence among people of different cultural and religious backgrounds. She looks at the form of terror acts that are being committed in the name of Islam, which she calls Islamic terrorism. According to Gabriel, "We are fighting Islamic Terrorism. The whole world is fighting Islamic terrorism, regardless of what watered down name they call it, such as the 'War on terror,' 'Oversees contingency,' or '"Man-made disasters'"". Gabriel advances her argument by criticising the approach of the left about Islamic terrorism. She asserts that the left refuses to identify the problem by name, let alone combat it. In Gabriel's viewpoint, religious conflicts take place through debates and discussions, but for the most part, everyone gets along just fine, except for one group of maniacs screaming "Allahu Akbar" as they mow down innocent civilians in their cars, explode themselves in malls, and slice people's necks like broccoli while reciting from the Quran. Islamic terrorism conflicts with the left's multicultural utopian fantasy, so rather than accurately attack the problem, they pretend it doesn't exist. While acts of terrorism have been carried out in the name of virtually every religion, Gabriel zeros in on the fact that it is not Buddhist terrorism, Jewish terrorism, Christian terrorism, or Hindu terrorism that is threatening peaceful civilisation and democratic values in Western nations and other parts of the world, but Islamic terrorism. Both Brigitte Gabriel and Boaz Ganor share the same opinion of who a terrorist is. For both, a terrorist is an individual who directly targets unarmed civilians and by carrying out terrorist attacks; the perpetrators make themselves the enemies of all mankind.

Roy (2007) sees the European citizens' engagement in terrorism as a generational development. In his article, "Islamic Terrorist Radicalization in Europe", Roy argues that there is no clear-cut sociological profile of the radicals or anything that could link them to a given socioeconomic situation. More precisely, the reasons that may push them towards violence are not specific enough but are shared by a larger population that deals with such a situation in a very different way. Explanations based on poverty, exclusion, racism, acculturation, etc., are simply not specific enough. There is clearly a generational dimension, Roy argues. In explaining further on

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this note, Roy sees Islamic radicalism as a youth movement. Frustration is obviously a key element in their radicalisation, but has more to do with a psychological than a social or economic dimension. For Roy, the Western-based Islamic terrorists are not the militant vanguard of the Muslim community; they are a lost generation, unmoored from traditional societies and cultures, frustrated by a Western society that does not meet their expectations. And, he asserts, their vision of a global ummah (a universal world order, ruled by an Islamic government (the Caliph) in accordance with the "Law of God"—the Shariah, and patterned after the community founded by Muhammad at Medina in 622 AD) is both a mirror and form of revenge against the globalisation that has made them what they are. Roy concludes that Al-Qaeda and consorts offer a narrative of revolt and violence that appeals to an unmoored youth and gives a religious and political dimension to youth revolt that could have been expressed in other forms of violence (Roy, 2007: 60).The Islamic State uses part of the Al-Qaeda system, which consequently captures the interest of many unmoored youths from European countries and presents them with what they claim to be an original Islam in its religious and political forms.

2.1.2. Radicalisation

The participation of European citizens in the ISIS enterprise in Iraq and Syria, coordinated and lone-wolf terror attacks in Europe and other regions of the world, as well as violent extremist activities in prisons, has made radicalisation an important subject of academic discourse. Angus (2016), for example, in his article, "Radicalization and Violent Extremism: Causes and Responses" claims that radicalisation happen' when a person's thinking and behaviour become significantly different from how most of the members of their society and community view social issues and participate politically.

Schmid (2013) argues in his research paper, "Radicalization, De-radicalization and Counter-radicalization", that the concept of radicalisation is by no means as solid and clear as many seem to take for granted. Above all, it cannot be understood on its own. The Expert Group on Violent Radicalization established by the European Commission in 2006, tasked to analyse the state of

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academic research on radicalisation to violence, in particular terrorism, noted in 2008 that "radicalization is a context-bound phenomenon par excellence. Global, sociological and political drivers matter as much as ideological and psychological ones". This expert group utilised a concise working definition of radicalisation, "socialization to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism". This simply implies that radicalisation is not a sudden phenomenon that is identified with an individual. It is a phenomenon that a person passes through with time. In this context, some developmental events are explainable in examining how an individual becomes radicalised, such as ideological brainwashing, belief system, socialisation with like-minded people, time and other processes that play important roles in the narratives of radicalised individuals.

Furthermore, Schmid argues that radicalisation, as a concept, has become very politicised, i.e., it has been used in the political game of labelling and blame attribution. Academics too have come up with multiple definitions that often lack precision (ibid). To defend his argument, Schmid cites specific samples of academic definitions and descriptions of the concept of radicalisation, which include the following[1]:

Taarnby (2005) sees radicalisation as "the progressive personal development from law-abiding Muslim to Militant Islamist". Jensen (2006) looks at radicalisation as "a process during which people gradually adopt views and ideas which might lead to the legitimization of political violence"; Ongering (2007) defines radicalisation as a "process of personal development whereby an individual adopts ever more extreme political or politic-religious ideas and goals, and the individual becoming convinced that the attainment of these goals justifies extreme methods"; Demant et al (2008) define radicalisation as "a process of de-legitimation, a process in which confidence in the system decreases and the individual retreats further and further into his or her own group, because he or she no longer feels part of society"; Ashour (2009) sees radicalisation as "a process of relative change in which a group undergoes ideological and/or behavioural transformations that lead to the rejection of democratic principles (including the peaceful alternation of power and the legitimacy of ideological and political pluralism) and possibly to the utilisation of violence, or to an increase in the levels of violence, to achieve political goals" (ibid).Olesen (2009) defines

[1]Schmid, A. P. (2013). Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review. ICCT, the Hague. 19. Available at: http://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013_2.pdf

radicalisation as "the process through which individuals and organisations adopt violent strategies – or threaten to do so – in order to achieve political goals"; Githens-Mazer (2009) sees radicalisation as "a collectively defined, individually felt moral obligation to participate in 'direct action' (legal or illegal – as opposed to 'apathy')"; Horgan and Bradock (2010) see radicalisation as "the social and psychological process of incrementally experienced commitment to extremist political or religious ideology"; Kortweg et al (2010) look at radicalisation as "the quest to drastically alter society, possibly through the use of unorthodox means, which can result in a threat to the democratic structures and institutions"; and Mandel (2012) describes radicalisation as "an increase in and/or reinforcing of extremism in the thinking, sentiments, and/or behaviour of individuals and/or groups of individuals".

By and large, the dominating point, or common agreement, in the description of radicalisation by academia is that "radicalisation is a process". In other words, radicalisation entails an individual submitting to an ideological orientation with time. It is connected to a belief system that is based on a specific ideology or set of ideologies. Radicalisation is not forceful or a sudden event; nor does it happen in a vacuum. It takes time and processes before its actual manifestation.

Beside the descriptions of radicalisation given by different scholars as indicated above, for the purpose of this research study, the definition of the European Commission (2008) will be leveraged in the description of prison radicalisation in the United Kingdom. According to this definition, "Radicalisation is understood as socialisation to extremism, which can manifest itself in the perpetration of acts of terrorism". In the context of radicalisation behind bars, critical observation of extremists' radicalisation techniques reveals that extremist usually take advantage of prisons as (1) places of vulnerability in which they can find plenty of "angry young men" who are "ripe" for radicalisation; (2) places where they bring together criminals and other offenders, and therefore create opportunities for networking; and (3) the state of imprisonment itself has been used by extremists as a tool for radicalisation, with extremists presenting incarceration as society's rejection of an inmate.

2.1.3. Violent extremism

Extremism is a vocal opposition to fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs (The European

Commission 2008). Extremists strive to create a homogeneous society based on rigid, dogmatic ideological tenets; they seek to make society conformist by suppressing all opposition and subjugating minorities. That distinguishes them from mere radicals who accept diversity and believe in the power of reason rather than dogma. In the context of democratic societies, violent extremist groups, movements and parties tend to have a political programme that contains many of the following elements: anti-constitutional, anti-democratic, anti-pluralist, authoritarian, fanatical, intolerant, non-compromising, single-minded black-or-white thinkers, rejecting the rule of law while adhering to an ends-justify-means philosophy, and aiming to realise their goals by any means, including, when the opportunity offers itself, the use of massive political violence against opponents (Schmid, 2013).

Violent extremist activities are not new, whether they are religiously motivated or otherwise. However, in recent times, the US invasion of Iraq, coupled with the conflict and civil unrest in Syria, have become contributory factors that led to the development of violent Islamist extremist activities of the defeated Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, with effects elsewhere. The extremist religious ideological pursuits of this group culminated in the perpetration of diverse acts of terror embarked on by its members and supporters in many nations of the world, including Europe. Spencer (2015) expanded on this point in his book, *The Complete Infidel's Guide to ISIS*. Spencer refers to the message of the Islamic State's Caliph, Al-Baghdadi, to the Muslims worldwide, appealing to them to identify with the oppressions of oppressed Muslims worldwide and challenging them to rise and fight against the infidels globally.

According to the caliph, said Spencer, "this warfare was necessary because Muslims are everywhere oppressed, being afflicted with the worst kinds of torture. Their honour is being violated. Their blood is being spilled. Prisoners are moaning and crying for help. Orphans and widows are complaining of their plight. Women, who have lost their children, are weeping. Mosques are being desecrated and sanctities are violated. All this was happening worldwide: 'Muslims' rights are forcibly seized in China, India, Palestine, Somalia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Caucasus, Sham (the Levant), Egypt, Iraq, Indonesia, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Ahvaz,

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Iran by the rafidah (shia), Pakistan, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria and Morocco, in the East and in the West.' What to do in response? Fight: So raise your ambitions. O soldiers of the Islamic State! For your brothers all over the world are waiting for your rescue and are anticipating your brigades." (Spencer, 2015: 180).

Spencer stresses that Al-Baghdadi predicted that the oppression would soon be over, and the Muslims would rule everywhere: "Soon by Allah's permission, a day will come when the Muslim walks everywhere as a master, having honour, being revered, with his head raised high and his dignity preserved. Anyone who dares to offend him will be disciplined, and any hand that touches him will be cut off" (ibid). In my view, this form of message can serve as an influencer to capture the hearts of some misguided Muslims, whether in Europe or elsewhere, who do not really have a good understanding of Islam. This can motivate them to commit themselves to any action that would display loyalty to this fanatical insinuation by the Islamic State Caliph, in the name of Islamic religion. It was not a surprise, therefore, to see that several Europeans yielded to this call, carrying out diverse terror acts in Europe to the extent that some even went as far as Syria and Iraq to support the Islamic State way of life.

2.1.4. Islamist extremism and Islamism

It is important to state that the concepts of Islamic extremism and Islamism, as well as Islam and Islamic resurgence, do not imply the same. Islamic extremism, as described by Ryan Mauro (2014), is driven by an interpretation of Islam that believes that Islamic law, or sharia, is an all-encompassing religious-political system. Since it is believed to be prescribed by Allah (an Arabic word for "god"), sharia must be enforced in the public sphere by a global Islamic state. As such, Islamic extremists consider it to be the only truly legitimate form of governance and reject democracy and human rights values. Thus, the ultimate objective of Islamic extremists is the merger of "mosque and state" under sharia law. Those who favour such an approach are called Islamists and their ideology is called Islamism, or political Islam. At this juncture, it is important

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to ask: what are the cultural behaviours or attitude indicators of an individual who is an Islamist, or how can an Islamist be identified?

Islamism, also referred to as Political Islam, according to Mandaville (2014), is a form of political theory and religious practice that has the goal of establishing an Islamist political order in the form of a state, whose governmental principles, institutions, and legal systems derive directly from the shari'ah. Political Islam or Islamism is a complete rejection of Western values and a proclaimed desire to establish an Islamic State worldwide, and this feature is not only part of the characteristics of jihadist groups but also of Islamists. In other words, Islamism is an imposition of an expansionist and politicised version of Islam under which society is to be ordered according to an interpretation of sharia law which is anti-Western, hostile to other religions, other strains of Islam, and totalitarian in nature. It takes radicalisation to be the processes by which adherents to this belief come to adopt it (Ministry of Justice, 2016).

Islamism has expressed itself in several seemingly non-violent movements and organisations operating in Europe. Many of these groups can be loosely linked to Salafist ideology. Salafism preaches a return to a mythical Islamic golden era that can only be obtained by referring to the only unadulterated sources: the Quran and the hadith. Salafism is "not only scripturalist but also literalist," arguing that Muslims should behave exactly how the pious forefathers of Islam behaved, according to these sources.

Gurski (2016), in his attempt to describe some identifiable signals of an Islamist, presents a list of 12 "tangible, observable behaviours and attitudes indicative of an individual with Islamist orientation". According to Gurski, "Our experience shows there is no profile of a potential terrorist, but we are beginning to recognise which behaviours and attitudes that suggest someone might be heading the path of violent radicalism". Gurski specifically refers to the following signals that characterise an Islamist: (1). sudden increase in intolerant religiosity; (2). rejection of different interpretations of Islam; (3). rejection of / intolerance for non-Muslims; (4). rejection of Western ways; (5). rejection of Western policies (domestic, military, foreign, social, etc.); (6).

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associating with like-minded people or changes in social circles; (7). obsession with jihadi and violent-extremist websites and social media; (8). obsession with or belief in the common narrative; (9). desire to travel to conflict zones or obsession with foreign conflicts; (10). obsession with violent jihad; (11). obsession with martyrdom; and (12). obsession with end-times. While Gurski was successful in making clear these significant behavioural indicators of a potential Islamist, he fails to mention what could motivate an individual to embrace Islamist ideology and the significant role that an unhealthy environment plays in the narrative and attitude formation of a potential Islamist.

Gabriel (2018) looks at Islamic extremism and Islamism from the angle of ideological radicalism. She argues that Islamists or Islamic extremists do not bother about what other people's political interest is or whose party they belong or support. "Islamists don't care whether you support President Trump, Hillary Clinton, or Bernie Sanders; jihadists only care that you do not submit to their radical Islamist worldview, Gabriel asserted. Do you believe in freedom of speech? They want you dead. Do you believe in equal opportunity for both men and women? They want you dead. Do you believe that men who beat their wives should go to jail? They want you dead. Do you believe female genital mutilation is barbaric? They want you dead. Do you subscribe to any religion other than radical Islam? They want you dead" (Gabriel, 2018: 10).

 Islamic terror groups are rapidly mushrooming around the globe and there are many factions with different names, but all with a unified goal of a worldwide Islamic empire. It doesn't matter what language they speak, what colour their skin is, or what passport they hold, what bonds them together is their radical ideology (ibid). For Brigitte Gabriel, Islamists or jihadists are given to radicalism. They are intolerant and their worldview is totalitarian. It is therefore important to know why these individuals are opposed to any ideological orientation that is different from theirs. Could it also be that there is competition within various political and social systems, and each system or ideology is making all efforts to be the only system that dominates the globe?

In "Islamism in Europe", Vidino (2015) looks at the development of Islamism in European countries from the perspective of immigration and intolerance of Europeans to understand and accommodate Islam. Vidino emphasises the migration development in Europe and Muslim assimilation on the continent as a significant trigger for Islamism in the region. He argues that the foundation of Islamists in European countries, without the exception of the United Kingdom, relates to migration and intolerance of some Europeans towards Islam. In his claim, the new Muslim presence in Europe has created some of the problems that often come with any large immigration wave: financial difficulties for the newcomers and tensions with the native population. While some of these issues are common to other immigrant groups in Europe, others are unquestionably peculiar to Muslim communities. He further argues that many of the tensions that have arisen around the Muslim presence in Europe over the last few decades have clear religious undertones. Advancing his argument, Vidino notes that parts of the tensions between Europe and the Muslim communities are due to the fear, ignorance, and intolerance of some Europeans towards Islam or, in many cases, any religion. He indicates another crucial factor that is generating tensions within the European societies, and that is the presence of Islamism or what is otherwise known as political Islam.

Framan and Nussio (2018) note that Islamophobia is not more prevalent today in European countries, such as Switzerland for example, than it was before the terrorist violence that Europe has experienced since the 2015 attacks in Paris. Still, Muslims today are often victims of discrimination. They argue that the polarised public discourse about Islam may have helped to erode psychological inhibitions against discriminatory behaviour. The authors further emphasise that since the rise of the so-called Islamic State and a wave of attacks in Western European countries, the nexus between Islam as a religion and the use of violence has been at the centre of political debate. Even though there have not been major Islamist terror attacks in Switzerland, there are fears in the country of a jihadist terror action that might occur, growth of radicalisation and the return of foreign fighters in the country. For this reason, the Swiss government, in coordination with other European countries, has taken certain preventive measures against

terrorism in this region. It is important, therefore, to ask: If the antecedent fear of Islamist or jihadist terrorism in a European country such as Switzerland has led to Islam being portrayed as a potential threat in that region, even though there is yet to be a major terror attack in the country, how is Islam being portrayed in a European region such as the United Kingdom, where terror attacks have become commonplace and the narratives of many of these terror actors have been connected to the relationships they had while serving jail terms in British prisons?

2.1.5. Islamic resurgence

In his thesis, Ikerionwu (2014) refers to Islamic resurgence as "an endeavour to re-establish Islamic values, Islamic practices, Islamic institutions, Islamic laws, indeed Islam in its entirety, in the lives of Muslims everywhere. It is an attempt to re-create an Islamic ethos, an Islamic social order, at the vortex of which the Islamic human being is guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah" (Ikerionwu, 2014: 10). In relation to the European citizens and their consequent terror engagement in Europe, it has also been argued that the operation of Islamists in Europe is part and parcel of the goals of the Islamic State in the region and elsewhere. Islamist resurgence in Europe has been connected to the global movement of the so-called Islamic fundamentalists from Syria and Iraq to synthesise the interest of other misguided Muslims not only in Europe, but also worldwide towards the establishment of a Caliphate (Ajisafe, 2017: 59).

It has also been argued that the Islamic State is following the strategy set out by Sayyid Qutb, known as the "intellectual godfather" of radical Islam (Denison, 2015: 10). Denison emphasises that the Islamic State is motivated by the writing of Qutb (1964) that every person on earth deserves a chance to become a Muslim. However, this opportunity exists only if the person lives in a nation that is truly Islamic, one governed solely by sharia. Thus, Muslims must topple every government and impose strict sharia law on every civilisation. Only then can people see true Islam and have an opportunity to choose it (ibid). Denison further mentions three loose factions who made up the Islamic State: one that comprised foreign volunteers—some are hardened jihadists, but many are misfits and adventure seekers. The second comprises the group's

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backbone—former Sunni Baathist army officers and local Iraqi Sunnis and tribes giving the Islamic State passive support. They are united in their hatred for the Shiites, who oppressed them under Iraq's previous Shiite-led government. The third faction is composed of true ideologues such as al-Baghdadi, with their own apocalyptic version of Islam (ibid: 5).

Similarly, Islamic resurgence is a global agenda that is being pursued by Islamic extremists; part of whose goals includes recruitment and radicalising willing individuals into their vision. It is important to stress that radicalisation, Islamic radicalisation in this sense, is not only peculiar to the Europeans, but has equally manifested itself in almost all the continents of the world. Robert Spencer (2015) expands this point in reference to the message of the Islamic State's Caliph Al-Baghdadi to the Muslims worldwide by stating that Al Baghdadi is appealing to Muslims to identify with the Caliphate and oppressions of Muslims worldwide, challenging them to rise and fight against the infidels globally. The point is that the new Caliph sees Muslims everywhere as being oppressed. "Muslims' rights are forcibly seized in China, India, Palestine, Somalia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Caucasus, Sham (the Levant), Egypt, Iraq, Indonesia, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Ahvaz, Iran by the rafidah (shia), Pakistan, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria and Morocco, in the East and in the West." What to do in response? Fight: So, raise your ambitions. O soldiers of the Islamic State! For your brothers all over the world are waiting for your rescue and are anticipating your brigades. Apparently, the caliph is not a big fan of democracy, Spencer noted (Spencer, 2015: 181). Actually, Islamists find it ideologically difficult to submit to democratic values and principles. The values and principles of Islamists and the West are against each other and that is why the Islamists are encouraged to rise and fight while they also pursue their ambition to expand their ideological belief to other parts of the globe. Part of their ambition is to dominate every arena of society with their ideology. The pursuit of this ambition is being demonstrated with the operations of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria; Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah insurgent activities in Northern Mozambique; Al Shabaab in the horn of Africa, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb; Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and its neighbouring countries as well as several Islamist-motivated terror attacks that pervaded Europe in recent years.

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2.1.6. Prison and violent extremism

Vogt argues that one of the greatest challenges facing correctional services is the incarceration of terrorists. This is because terrorists do not stop being terrorists simply because they are in prison. They continue to view themselves as soldiers in a divine war. They view corrections personnel as soldiers in the opposing army in this war. He particularly examines three areas of great concern to corrections staff, namely: the potential for inmate radicalisation in prisons, the potential for terrorist organisation in prisons and the potential for terrorist organisations targeting correctional institutions. He therefore recommends that all corrections personnel must be trained in the indicators of radicalisation and terrorist organisation in prisons, the warning signs of an impending terrorist attack, and proper emergency response to a terrorist attack. However, Vogt fails to mention the influences that motivate prisoners to become radicalised, embrace radical ideologies and be capable of engaging in terror activities.

A study by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence at King's College, London in 2010 presented evidence from 15 countries about how inmates were being radicalised or reformed in prison. The report of the study establishes that prisons could play both positive and negative roles in tackling problems of radicalisation and terrorism, yet also be places of vulnerability. The report revealed that prisons were breeding grounds for radicalisation, as they provided near-perfect conditions for radical ideologies to flourish. Prisons are "places of vulnerability", which produce "identity seekers", "protection seekers" and "rebels" in greater numbers than other environments. They provide conditions in which radical; religiously framed ideologies can flourish. Again, the report of the study remarked that religious conversion was not the same as radicalisation. In its conclusions, the report argued that prisons matter and it is important to gain a better understanding of their role in radicalising people and reforming them. The authors emphasise that the extent of the problem remains unclear, and the issue clearly needs to be addressed. Overcrowding and under-staffing were suggested as possible factors that could exacerbate the problem of radicalisation.

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Dunleavy (2017) gives an analytical explanation of the connection between terrorism and imprisonment in his article titled "Brothers, Prison, and the Reign of Terror". In this article, he narrated the deadly, coordinated attacks on the Brussels airport and Metro line, which marked the third major terrorist attack to have rattled the European Union since the beginning of 2015. Each attack, according to Dunleavy, was carried out by terrorists sharing the radical Islamist ideology pushed by the Islamic State. The attacks all featured brothers who had spent time in prisons, Dunleavy claimed. The attacks were suicide bombings by brothers Brahim and Khalid el-Bakraoui. Both had extensive criminal histories and had spent time in prison. In 2010, Ibrahim was sentenced to prison for armed robbery. The next year, Khalid received a prison sentence for carjacking and possession of a weapon (Dunleavy, 2017).

The Brussels attacks came days after authorities finally tracked down Salah Abdeslam, a key conspirator and the only known surviving terrorist from November's multi-targeted attacks in Paris which killed as many as 130 people and wounded more than 350. Abdeslam's brother, Ibrahim, blew himself up in the attack at the Voltaire Cafe. Salah had an extensive criminal history of petty crimes and was jailed in 2010 for robbery. That was the second terrorist attack to strike Paris in 2015. In January 2015, brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi entered the offices of the *Charlie Hebdo* magazine and killed 12 people. The Kouachis were known to authorities for prior criminality. Cherif spent almost two years in the Fleury-Merogis prison where he met and was radicalised by a fellow inmate and Al-Qaeda associate named Djamel Beghal. Cherif Kouachi's cellmate was Amedy Coulibaly. Coulibaly was responsible for killing the French police officer and the four hostages in the Jewish deli. This implies that if the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks had passed through European prison systems and there was no positive change in attitude and behaviour, something is wrong with the prison system (ibid).

Charles Allen, a one-time Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis Chief Intelligence Officer in the US Department of Homeland Security, claimed in his report to the US Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs that radicalisation occurs through a variety of human and institutional catalysts, such as formal and informal religious institutions

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(for example, prisons) and increasingly within university settings and youth groups. Charismatic leaders and the Internet play significant roles in this process. According to his report, "Radicalization in prison is becoming increasingly common. The nature of the prison environment, coupled with societal marginalization of convicts, cultivates a strong desire for social bonding, group identity, protection, spiritual guidance, and positive reinforcement, all things that extremist actors exploit. The degree to which prison radicalization is problematic varies greatly from state to state. While high-profile cases in recent years focused attention on the radicalization of Muslim inmates, this phenomenon is significantly less endemic than recruitment and violence by criminals in prisons.

Denison (2015) argues that prison could play a major role in the radicalisation process of prisoners. In his argument, he cited the case of the leader of ISIS, Abubakr al Baghdadi, who became radicalised while he was imprisoned by the US Army in Iraq. Denison narrated that Abubakr al Baghdadi was originally named Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarra and grew up in Samarra, part of the Sunni region north of Baghdad. He was a teacher of Salafi Islam (a very conservative tradition). For Denison, Al-Baghdadi's conversion to jihadist terrorism is a mystery. This is because while Al-Baghdadi was a member of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, eyewitnesses say he did not participate in its violent uprising against the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. However, in 2005, he was imprisoned by American forces in Camp Bucca. When intelligence reports claimed that he had been fighting against the US occupation. He kept such a low profile that he was released when the prison shut down in 2009. His parting comment, "I will see you guys in New York," was not taken as a threat by the guards. However, observers believe that al-Baghdadi was radicalised in prison by Al-Qaeda jihadists he met there. When he was released, he reaffirmed his membership of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. In 2010, the group's leader was killed in a US air strike. Surprisingly, al-Baghdadi was elected to succeed him and lead Al-Qaeda's Islamic State of Iraq. As noted, he broke away from Al-Qaeda in 2014.

A report from the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, Kings College London, states that for nearly a decade, European prisons have been in the spotlight as places where
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extremist radicalisation, recruitment, and in some cases operational planning have taken place. The principal reason why prisons have become so important is that, in contrast to separatist-nationalist groups such as the IRA or Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA) who regarded their fighters as "political" prisoners and therefore wanted nothing to do with "ordinary" murderers, rapists, and thieves, jihadists have embraced prisons as locations in which they can propagate their ideology and recruit members. For example, the radical cleric Abu Qatada-who was often referred to as Osama bin Laden's "Ambassador to Europe"—talked about "seeing the signs of Allah" within British prisons: "Young men enter Islam and then... learn Arabic and the Sharia in a short number of months" (Basra, Neumann & Claudia, 2016).

A significant catalyst for violent extremism in Europe is connected to grievance against Western policies in some Muslim countries. Many of the Western actions and policies in the Middle Eastern countries have propelled Islamist extremism against Western countries and this has manifested itself in the radicalisation of European citizens leading to various terror acts. As Hunter (2017) argues, since the early 1990s, the linkage between events in predominantly Muslim countries and the radicalisation of Muslims in Europe has deepened. Such events include, but are not limited to, the Persian Gulf War of 1991, the Algerian civil war of 1991–1997, the wars in Bosnia and Chechnya, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and now the civil war in Syria. According to Hunter, "among other things, these wars have produced new extremist groups and ideologies that have then established links with European Muslims" (Hunter 2017).

In the same light, European governments' policies have been blamed as a facilitator of violent extremism and consequent radicalisation of some European citizens. This dimension of policy mistake is demonstrated in the handling of radicalisation challenges in some European countries such as the UK. Gilles Kepel, in his argument, blames the UK government because of the way the country initially handled the problem of radicalisation, which has directly or indirectly backfired on its communities with repeated terror attacks in cities like London and Manchester. Kepel argues that the British state has made the mistake of subcontracting the management of its Muslim population to the local community brokers, an attitude rooted in the Raj system in India.

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He emphasised that "in places like Manchester and Birmingham, they relied on Salafi community leaders while cutting back the highly fragmented police force". In other words, the UK preferred to use Salafist leaders to handle the scourge of radicalisation in these communities. On the contrary, the jihadists took advantage of this platform to become more radical. Kepel claims that in London—or Londonistan, as he calls it—"They gave shelter to radical Islamist leaders from around the world as a sort of insurance policy against jihadi terrorism" (Lerner 2017).

Deeham Khan reveals in her documentary video interview titled "Jihad" a chain of motivations that propel young Europeans into radicalisation. Khan argues that radicalisation in Europe is connected to a feeling of pain. According to her, radicalisation is a pain of young Europeans facing racism, exclusion from society, isolation from the opposite sex, overwhelming pressures from families and communities, crisis of identity and feeling powerless and insignificant. Khan further states that although these Europeans have access to material comfort in the West, they are disgruntled with the Western cultural orientation of European societies and many of them are living lives of emotional poverty. As a result, they turn to a society that understands and appeals to their feelings and could show them how to respond to the hostile society where they find themselves.

Although Khan and others have attempted to reveal channels and motivations for radicalisation occurrence in Europe in general, and their arguments are fundamental in the study of radicalisation and extremism in European context, the authors do not specify how radicalisation spreads in European society, especially in the United Kingdom. While it is important to discuss motivations that may drive individuals to extremism, it is equally critical not to overlook how radicalisation becomes proliferous in a particular society, such as the UK, which is the geographical focus of this research. From January to September 2017, the UK experienced six terror attacks by Islamists, while British prisons were found to be a major channel of spreading extremist ideology and recruitment channel for Islamists to radicalise fellow inmates. Among other things, this research attempts to investigate and examine why and how radicalisation and

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violent extremist ideas are being perpetuated in prisons in the United Kingdom and what needs to be done to stem its proliferation.

2.2. Theoretical frameworks: Social network and contagion theories

The theoretical explanations for this study are drawn from social network and contagion theories to shed light on the discourse of radicalisation and violent extremism in European prisons, with specific reference to prisons in the United Kingdom. As described by Maria Manuela Cruz-Cunha et al (2011), social network theory, also called network theory, is a system of thought made of nodes, which are generally individuals or organisations. It indicates the ways in which people are connected through various social familiarities ranging from casual acquaintance to close familiar bonds. In other words, the network theory demonstrates that social connectivity operates on many levels, from an individual level to a group level, and later develops to the level of an organisation.

The network plays a critical role in determining the way problems are solved, organisations are run, and the degree to which individuals and groups succeed in achieving their goals. This theory is useful both in understanding recruitment processes of radicalised prisoners in the UK and how communication and socialisation connect recruiters and their recruits when located in the same prison environment. The social network theory helps in understanding the possible techniques of radicalisation of inmates within UK prisons and the channels through which this advance within a prison system.

In the context of radicalisation and violent extremist behaviours of prisoners in the UK, two features are paramount, and network theory enables us to understand these. The first feature is communication, and the second is socialisation. Both features go hand in hand and play a defining role in the recruitment processes of vulnerable inmates into radical ideology as exemplified by radical extremists who are recruiters. In any social groupings, communication and socialisation play a significant role, and without exception, they also play a pivotal role in the narrative of radicalised inmates in prisons in the UK. Generally, a need for belonging would

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influence a new prisoner to commit or surrender his will to interact with a charismatic or caring inmate who engages with the newcomer directly or indirectly. Porta and Diani (1999: 116) in their social movement discourse argue that opening channels of communication usually proves useful for promoting a specific initiative or agenda. The authors emphasise that communication facilitates the growth of mutual trust and solidarity between and among different individuals (ibid).

In other words, communication has the potential capacity to influence an individual to become a member of a group, be it a terror group or otherwise, and develop a social connection. Such socialisation could lead to strong bonding between individuals in the same network. On the other hand, Porta and Diani (1999: 116) indicate that even though one might not go as far as talking about collective identity in this case, a social bond could be present. This is because people do not usually join a group or organisation which they perceive as radically incompatible and hostile towards them (ibid).

Building on the above, there is a parallel understanding of the role of communication and social networking or social interaction in the radicalisation processes of prisoners within prisons in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. This has also been demonstrated in the narratives of Europeans, who embrace radical ideological orientation of the Islamic State. Spencer (2015), for instance, expands this point in reference to the message of the late self-proclaimed Caliph of the Islamic State, Al Baghdadi. According to Spencer (2015), Al Baghdadi appealed to Muslims worldwide to identify with the Caliphate as well as oppressions of Muslims globally, challenging them to rise and fight against the infidels. As a result of this appeal, thousands of European Muslims from various countries went to Syria and Iraq to demonstrate their solidarity to the ideological agenda of the Islamic State. The social and cultural identification and connection with the message of the leader of the Islamist state appeal to them and equally serve as a direct response to the communication of the "Islamic State leader".

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Even though the Caliph was not present in all these locations, that specific communication was enough to influence the rise of many radicals (whether within or outside prisons) who identified with the message of Al Baghdadi and committed terror attacks against the infidels in various regions of the world. This shows the potency of communication in connection with socialisation.

In addition, incidents of terror in Europe in recent years have also authenticated the role of communication in the radicalisation processes of Islamist radicals. For example, the case of a 16-year-old Danish girl who stabbed her mother to death after viewing several ISIS videos, wherein ISIS beheaded their hostage, proves that communication via social network is key to radicalisation. It was reported that prior to the beheading of her mother, Lisa Borch had watched several YouTube videos of beheadings and killings of ISIS hostages (Malm, 2016). This means that the more Lisa Borch was committed to viewing ISIS messages of beheading, the more likely she was to replicate what she was viewing. According to a position stated in court by her defence counsel, Lisa Borch did not commit the crime alone but was persuaded by her 29-year-old boyfriend, Bakhtiar Mohammed Abdulla, to behead her mother. This further confirms the connection between socialisation, communication, and radicalisation.

It can therefore be explained that the transmission of radical Islamist ideas inside and outside the UK prisons and its continuity among the radicals in the country (which often leads to terror actions) is facilitated largely through social interaction and communication. Dearden (2018) narrated how Harry Sarfo was radicalised while in prison through communication rooted in social networking and social mingling with individuals who possessed similar radical and extremist views. Sarfo confirmed that he was lured into extremist and radical ideas through videos from which he learned about "unity in diversity under one flag…comprising whites, blacks, Asians and Arabs from all walks of life, protecting the Sunni Muslims" (Dearden, 2018). Dearden, referring to the narrative of Sarfo, commented that, "I learned the ideology of Tawheed and Jihad, which changed my whole understanding of Islam". "I served one year in prison and after that, I was released and started to visit a mosque which was known for its extreme views" (Dearden, 2018).

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Further, network theory sheds light on how recruitment takes place inside prisons, often initiated by a charismatic extremist who is sourcing new recruits. This is because, the Islamist radical idea has to be transmitted from one end to the other. This validates the premises of communication and socialisation. In this regard, MacEoin (2016) cited the example of Anjem Choudary, a well-known British Islamist and charismatic extremist who emphatically remarked in 2016 that, "If they arrest me and put me in prison…I will carry on in prison and I will radicalise everyone in prison" (MacEoin, 2016). That implies that Anjem Choudary understood the impact of communicating his Islamist message to vulnerable inmates, while maximising prison custody as a recruitment tool to communicate and actualise his mission within the social space the prison estates provide.

From another perspective, network theory also helps us understand the self-radicalisation process. Even though a radical is completely independent in this process of radicalisation—that is to say, he does not have any affiliation to an extremist group—there is an element of communication and socialisation that is involved. The radicalised is responding to an extremist preaching, or a literature or a persuasive message from a particular role model extremist. The bottom line is communication within a social space is usually involved. In essence, radicalisation processes blossom on the platform of networking through communication and social interactions.

Communication and socialisation are not only instrumental in explaining the radicalisation of inmates inside prisons, whether in the United Kingdom or elsewhere; they also play a significant part in the counterterrorism and deradicalisation processes of radicals. Archetti (2015) brought to bear the significant role communication plays in counterterrorism and deradicalisation efforts (Archetti, 2015: 1). In her argument, she emphasised the greater understanding of the usefulness of communication in the 21st century as an effective counter-terrorism technique (ibid). Archetti, however, lamented that even though strategic communication has been advocated by many analysts as an essential weapon in countering extremism and radicalisation, only few seem to truly understand the reality and usefulness of communication in the 21st-century environment, where such a tool is sorely needed (ibid).

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2.3. Social contagion theory

Another related and relevant theory in explaining radicalisation of inmates in UK prisons is social contagion theory, propounded by Crenshaw (1981). In her argument, Crenshaw (1981) links social networking, communication, behavioural emulation with terror action, embedded in radical orientation. Specifically, Crenshaw (1981), states that individuals adopt the attitudes or behaviours of others in the social network in which they communicate. The contagion theory explains that individual perceptions are influenced by the perceptions of other members in their social or friendship network. This implies that the proximity of two actors in a social network is associated with the occurrence of interpersonal influence or behaviour between those actors. In other words, social contagion theory argues that behaviours and perceptions initiated by one member of a network have the capacity to influence the behaviours of others in the same network.

Basra and Neumann (2020) argued that most cases of jihadist prison radicalisation in recent years have involved some degree of socialisation between "regular" criminals and extremists. There are very few cases where it appears that an inmate became radicalised alone without any social interaction, encouragement, or guidance from others. Contrary to popular perceptions, radicalisation is not always purely ideological in nature. The authors stressed that often, radicalisation is also a pragmatic choice made by an individual in an unsafe and hostile environment. Inmates, especially those who are new to a prison, must make alliances, as one recently released French inmate explained:

In prison, you must survive…To do that, you have to get close to a group. Otherwise, at best, you suffer. At worst, you die. When I was incarcerated at Les Baumettes, the bearded men offered me protection and a mobile phone…in exchange for five prayers a day. I wasn't practising, but I obeyed. I read their Quran, wore the djellaba, turned off the music in the cell, showered in my shorts. I had a pious life because it was the only way to have peace. One day they asked me if I was ready to do jihad. They said they could help me organise a violent action outside.

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Therefore, in the context of radicalisation of prisoners, contagion theory is useful to comprehend the spread of radical ideology and extremist behaviour inside prisons in the UK. The contagion theory is helpful to understand the contagiousness of extremist ideas as advertised by Islamist inmates, who identify with a specific terrorist network and its ideological orientation and are committed to spreading the ideology of such network while serving jail time. The network theory assists us to grasp how vulnerable inmates within prison environments in the UK could be influenced with extremist views because of the relationship they have developed with extremist inmates or vice versa.

In the context of radicalisation behind bars in the UK, Crenshaw's contagion theory helps us understand the causal factors behind the proliferation of radical ideas because of the influence of a belief system and extremist religious values, often transmitted by inmates who are members of a particular extremist group. As mentioned earlier, this explains why Islamists such as Anjem Choudary and others were confident using prisons to spread their radical ideas and recruit vulnerable inmates into their extremist orientation. It is important to note that the common ground of Islamists is extremism and jihadism, and they often source new recruits through various channels, including prisons. Significantly, Islamist radicals have understood the usefulness of the prison environment and committed themselves to leveraging this space to recruit their victims.

2.4. Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, a literature review assists a researcher to recognise agreements and resolve contrary opinions of other scholars on a particular subject and identify areas where his/her work fits within the context of the existing literature. Using thematic or conceptual method through literature review, this chapter has endeavoured to explain the conceptual themes of the study, cutting across terrorism, radicalisation, Islamist extremism, Islamism and imprisonment. More importantly, even though scholars such as Alex Schmid, Boaz Ganor, Hussein Solomon, Shireen Hunter, Gilles Kepel, David Rapoport, and others have expressed

their opinions on the aforementioned themes or concepts relating to this study, the amount and quality of empirical research on radicalisation and violent extremism within European correctional facilities, with reference to the UK prison environments, is still inadequate, and this is one of the gaps this study intends to fill.

Importantly, radicalisation, as a process of socialisation, has been argued to be a catalyst for engaging in terror activities in and out of prisons in Europe and also for countering terrorism. Therefore, it is imperative to understand this subject as a precondition to effectively combat terror activities in this region, especially in the United Kingdom, where terror attacks have been repeatedly perpetrated by former prisoners. The lessons learned in this regard would be useful in other regions of the world where the challenge of radicalisation and extremist orientation, leading to a tendency towards terrorism. From a theoretical perspective, the factors of social network, communication, belief system as well as contagious behaviours play a major role in the development of radical attitude and perpetration of terror activities. As mentioned above, the insights that social networking and contagion offer into radicalisation and terrorism are also useful for counter-terrorism responses by national governments, including that of the UK.

CHAPTER THREE: THE CHARACTER OF ISLAMIST RADICALISATION IN UNITED KINGDOM PRISONS

3.1. Introduction

What is the purpose of imprisonment of offenders? As stated by the UK Justice Secretary David Gauke, depriving someone of their liberty for a period is one of the most significant powers available to the state and must be imposed with respect for the rule of law and with purpose (Gov.uk, 2018). For Gauke, prison is the sharp end of the UK justice system. By imposing this serious sanction, it must be clear about what prison is for. Imprisonment of offenders is firstly to protect the public from harm. In other words, Gauke meant that by putting offenders in prisons, the prison institution will help to safeguard the public from dangerous and violent individuals, who are a threat to human security and peace. Second, imprisonment is a form of retributive punishment for offenders. This implies that prisons deprive offenders of their liberty and certain freedoms that are enjoyed by the rest of the society and act as a deterrent. The third purpose of imprisonment is rehabilitation. This implies that prisons are meant to provide offenders with the opportunity to reflect on and take responsibility for their crimes and prepare them for a law-abiding life when they are released (ibid).

It is important to query whether these objectives are being achieved in the 21st-century experience of the UK prison institution management. Gauke lamented that prisons do not always achieve what they are there to do and the reasons for this are varied and complex. Nevertheless, he emphasised that it is only by prioritising rehabilitation that the institution can reduce reoffending and, in turn, the numbers of future victims of crime. He concluded that getting the basics right is the key to achieving security, safety, and decency of the UK populace (ibid).

Peer-to-peer radicalisation, as a challenge within prisons, has been identified as one factor fuelling radicalisation, violent extremist orientation and terror capability in Europe in general and particularly in the UK. This implies that there are other channels through which radicalisation and violent extremist ideology are being perpetuated, and prisons are just one of

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them. Although prisons' objectives, among others, include provision of a healthy environment for the reformation of law breakers, paradoxically they are increasingly doing the exact opposite, becoming breeding grounds for radical ideas. For instance, terrorist attacks in cities such as Brussels, Paris, London, and Manchester were carried out by people radicalised in prison while serving jail terms. This paradox calls for serious questions regarding why and how prisons are turning into sites for the recruitment of inmates into radical ideology and violent extremism.

Among other European countries, the UK particularly has witnessed the emergence of Islamists who have spent a period in prison and made efforts to indoctrinate or influence other inmates with their radical ideology. In a BBC interview with John Shelly (an ex-prisoner, who had spent time in more than 40 jails including HMP Whitemoor), "over the last few years, there's been a real sort of noticeable change of people becoming radicalised and getting themselves involved in violent situations—and being coerced into doing that by some of what you might call the more prominent Muslims that are inside for various offences" (BBC News, 2015).

The chapter examines what makes prison radicalisation distinct from other channels of radicalisation, why radicalisation is taking place inside prisons and how this development is occurring, as well as what could influence some inmates to embrace radical ideas in prisons. In addition, the chapter's segments examine prisons beyond the dictionary description, looking at the instrumentality of religion in the recruitment processes of inmates, tactics of charismatic extremists in the recruitment process of inmates, prisoners' vulnerabilities inside prisons and narratives of radicalised prisoners from criminal behaviours to radical ideology. This examination is done within the framework of social networks and contagion as explanatory tools.

3.2. Why radicalisation occurs behind bars in the United Kingdom

It is important to understand that imprisonment does not just occur, but it is part and parcel of a criminal justice system, which invariably has direct or indirect impact on prisons, prison systems and administration, as well as prisoners. In the same vein, radicalisation does not just occur, but it is a process, which implies that it does not happen in a vacuum but is a process through which

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an individual passes into an act of terror or a criminal action. In other words, radicalisation might begin as socialisation that develops into extremism, which consequently ends in committing acts of terror or crime. Dearden (2018) argues that inside prisons in the UK, criminal and terrorist milieus have connected and cross-fertilised. Dearden sees the UK prisons as microcosms of the crime–terror nexus, where radicalisation, recruitment, networking, and even terrorist plotting has taken place (ibid).

Salford University (2018) reported that a total of 36 people were killed by terrorists in the UK in 2017, including major incidents in both Manchester and London. It has been argued that peer-to-peer radicalisation in prisons has been identified as a factor fuelling radicalisation and extremism in Europe in general and in the UK. For example, Europe's terror attacks revealed that the Manchester, London, Brussels, Paris Bataclan and Paris *Charlie Hebdo* attackers had been radicalised in prison while serving jail terms. Paradoxically, prisons are meant to serve as incubators of peaceful change and transformation of inmates but have played an enormous role in the narratives of radical and militant movement in modern times (Neumann, 2010: 7). For this reason, the spread of extreme Islamist ideologies in UK prisons has become a concern to the government.

The recurring question is: Why is the institution meant for the reformation of offenders now facilitating religious radicalism and violent extremism of people behind bars with the potential for terrorist actions and how does this occur? This is not to conclude that radicalisation occurs only within prison environment in the UK, in other European countries or elsewhere. However, critical examination of radicalisation and violent extremist development in Europe has been noted to feature prisons, while other channels such as mosques, social media, propaganda messaging, social grouping with friends and family members as well as schools and university campuses have also been leveraged by Islamist radicals and extremists to recruit vulnerable individuals and perpetuate their ideologies. Emphatically, several accounts by convicted terrorists in Europe and elsewhere point to the fact that their paths into radical ideology started with and were influenced by encounters they had while serving jail terms.

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In his argument on why prisons facilitate radicalisation and violent extremist ideological orientation of prisoners, Shane Bryans (a former UK prison governor and programme manager at the International Centre for Prison Studies) maintained that certain prison environments can facilitate radicalisation, especially where there is severe overcrowding and underfunded rehabilitation activities. Unsafe and disorderly prisons aggravate the conditions that make prisoners vulnerable to radicalisation (Bryans, 2014). For Bryans, extremists will find it easier to fill the spiritual and material vacuum created by prison systems that fail to provide prisoners with a set of meaningful activities towards which their energies can be directed (ibid). Bryans emphasised that crowded and under-resourced prisons could equally create a "safety dilemma" in which prisoners feel compelled to turn to extremists for protection and other social benefits or advantages. In the same vein, badly run prisons create the physical and ideological space in which extremist inmates can operate freely and, at the same time, reinforce recruited prisoners who have been treated unfairly by the State (ibid).

Meanwhile, it has been argued that socioeconomic deprivation, including low education attainment, unemployment, and underemployment, are among the most common and contested explanations for radicalisation in general; nevertheless, the forces of isolation from the outside world, a perceived sense of victimisation, a need for belonging, a sense of vulnerability, and prolonged exposure to radical individuals are also argued to be contributory factors for the proliferation of prison radicalisation in the United Kingdom (Yaacoub, 2018: 79).

The distinction of prison radicalisation from other forms of radicalisation is well articulated by Roy (2017). In his study of the 21st-century form of religious radicalisation in relation with prisons, Roy argues that prison amplifies many of the factors that lead to radicalisation. In Roy's argument, generational dimension, revolt against the system, formation of a tight-knit group, search for dignity related to respect for the norm, and reinterpretation of crime as legitimate political protest are all fuelling contemporary radicalisation (Roy, 2017).

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Yaacoub (2018) shares a similar perspective with Roy, connecting his argument to the state and environmental conditions of prisons regarding radicalisation of inmates. Yaacoub (2018) argues that it is fallacious to consider ideology as "tightly coupled, inelastic set of values, beliefs, and ideas." In fact, prisons offer radicalisers an ideal atmosphere for introducing their extreme ideologies and doctrines by playing on certain prisoners' concerns and feelings to gain their trust, garner their support, and recruit them into their group, using the social networks that appalling prison conditions enable. It is more likely to begin through such personal relationships rather than through ranting, wild-eyed extremist "brainwashing" of an unwilling audience (Yaacoub, 2018: 79).

In such an environment, many prisoners have a strong desire to develop a sense of belonging, group identity, protection, and religious guidance. A 2016 report submitted to the French National Assembly claims that "Everyone knows that prison is one of the soils of radicalization". Incarceration gives many young Muslims the "opportunity to be exposed to radical discourse and to become involved in radical political or even militant activity (ibid). For example, in the United Kingdom, some imprisoned Islamists have adopted a proactive strategy of offering food, friendship, and spiritual support to new arrivals in prison. The same approach is used in Lebanon prisons, where the influential prisoners offer a secure ambiance for new prisoners to obtain their trust. They demonstrate a route out of isolation, creating a sense of involvement in a wider project, and presenting a vision of a promised victory. Extremists are known for making the most of these circumstances by contacting and recruiting non-radicalised prisoners into their radical ways of thinking (ibid).

In a different perspective, Liebling, Arnold, and Straub (2012) consider the challenge of trust as a contributory factor that facilitates lack of order and loss of control of prisoners in the prison system. They look at how this manifested in prisons where, for example, an extremist was allowed to coordinate Islamic religious programmes for people behind bars. In their argument, evidence was available that "inappropriate" prisoners were leading Friday prayers in some prisons, and that the leader of the failed 21 July 2005 London bombing had converted to Islam in

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prison before "graduating to terrorism via various radical London mosques and camps in Afghanistan" after his release. Prisoners were increasingly exposed to violence if they resisted efforts to recruit and convert the vulnerable. These complex and confounded issues of faith identity, belief, and risk did not seem captured conceptually by the standard terminology of "order", "control" or "security". They were also problems of trust, Liebling et al concluded (Liebling et al, 2012: 3).

Stewart (2018) argues that prisons could serve as universities of crime for grassroots jihadists who lack terrorist tradecraft, and career criminals who convert will already possess skills useful in attacks. The number of people locked up in prison is influenced by three things: the rate at which crimes are committed, the tendency to send convicted criminals to prison for a particular crime and the length of prison sentences given to inmates. Changes in any of these can lead to changes in the proportion in prison at any point in time.

This development challenges us to have a glimpse into the essence of prison and why the prison system was established in England, Wales, and Scotland, as documented in "Prison Rule 1 in England and Wales and Prison Rule 5 in Scotland". According to these documents: the purpose of the training and treatment of convicted prisoners shall be to encourage them to lead a good and useful life (Prison Rule 1, England, and Wales); the purposes of the training and treatment of convicted prisoners shall be to establish in them the will to lead a good and useful life on discharge and to fit them to do so (Prison Rule 5, Scotland) (Fitzgerald & Sim, 1982: 25).

It can therefore be explained that the motive of imprisonment of a convicted offender is not only to withdraw his freedom of movement, but also to reform, transform and rehabilitate such an individual for himself/herself and to be suitable to be integrated into a civil society as a better individual. In other words, in the sight of the state in England, Wales and Scotland, the essence of putting a convicted law breaker behind bars is not to make him/her worse than he is or render him useless for himself/herself and his/her community. Rather, the purpose includes restoring him/her into a law-abiding, useful, and productive citizen.

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Based on the above, it could be explained that the motive of sending an offender to jail is not only to punish him by curtailing his freedom of movement to an extent, but to make him/her a suitable citizen who is fit to live responsibly together with his/her community in a relevant way. In the light of the current development of terrorist acts in the UK, some have raised the need to possibly create a different type of prison for extremists or terrorist offenders, considering the fact they may not be willing to be de-radicalised in as much their motivation is ideological. It has been noted that some are so radicalised that they are a danger to the public and may need to be locked away for as long as it takes to purge them of their ideological orientations. Meanwhile, the question is: Will prison be regarded as a breeding ground for radicalisation if terrorists are not kept in the same prisons as other convicts of the judicial system?

3.3. How radicalisation occurs inside prisons in the UK

There are multilayer factors responsible for offenders engaging in violent extremism activities behind bars. One of the prominent factors is the social interaction of inmates. Without any misgivings, social interaction and engagement among prisoners in the UK stands to validate how social relations of a group with similar belief systems or religious orientations could trigger a phenomenon of radicalisation and violent extremist ideas in the group. As described by Maria Manuela Cruz-Cunha et al (2011), social network theory, also called network theory, sheds light on the discourse of radicalisation and violent extremism, with specific reference to prisons and prisoners in the United Kingdom. Social network theory is a system of thought, made of nodes which are generally individuals or organisations. It indicates the ways in which people are connected through various social familiarities, ranging from casual acquaintance to close familiar bonds. The network theory demonstrates that social connectivity operates on many levels, from an individual level to a group level, and later develops to the level of an organisation. This plays a critical role in determining the way problems are solved, organisations are run, and the degree to which individuals and groups succeed in achieving their goals. This theory is potentially significant in understanding how recruitment operation into Islamist radical ideology inside UK prisons occurs.

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With reference to the above argument, terror attacks in November 2019 and February 2020 in the UK would be cited to buttress how socialisation among prisoners triggers recruitment into radical ideas and consequently leads to perpetrating acts of terror. Between November 2019 and February 2020, not less than three terror attacks were reportedly perpetrated by Islamists in the United Kingdom. Surprisingly, the trio incidences were prison connected. On Sunday afternoon, 3 February 2020, Sudesh Amman, 20, stabbed two people on a busy south London street. Ammon was said to be newly released from prison just a week earlier, after serving about half of a 40-month prison sentence. He was in possession of jihadist literature which included manuals on how to conduct deadly knife attacks (Dunleavy, 2020). According to a news report, Amman's Mother claimed that time spent inside prison had actually radicalised her son (Christian, 2020).

Similarly, just two months earlier, Usman Khan, a former UK prisoner, launched a frenzied knife attack in Central London. Khan's knife attack eventually killed two people and wounded several others near London Bridge but was later shot dead by the police. Usman Khan was first arrested in December 2010 and sentenced in 2012 to indeterminate detention for public protection with a minimum jail term of eight years (Dunleavy, 2020). According to Dunleavy (2020), "we know that terrorists do not fear prison time. For many, it emboldens their commitment to jihad, and often, they are the catalysts in recruiting and radicalising other inmates to their twisted beliefs". Dunleavy lamented that this is a big challenge for European countries; because where else should terror actors be put if not inside prisons? Unfortunately, they continue to do more harm even when they are being incarcerated (ibid).

In late December 2019, *The Times* reported that Islamists in Britain's prisons were holding makeshift Sharia trials, circulating banned books, and openly grooming young Muslim inmates. A former prisoner, Milton Keynes, who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, claimed that he took part in Sharia courts and punishment beatings and narrated how he came to join a group of prisoners at Her Majesty's Prison in Woodhill. These revelations prompted security experts to call for a fundamental review of terrorist radicalisation in jails across Britain (O'Neill, 2019).

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In the same vein, in January 2020, *The Times* reported that five prison officers were hospitalised after an attack was perpetrated by two inmates at Her Majesty's Prison in Whitemoor. According to this report, the men wore fake suicide belts and wielded bladed weapons. They slashed at prison staff, shouting Allahu Akbar. One of the attackers was jailed in 2015 for plotting to behead an army cadet. A witness to the attack reported that the attack was brutal. There was a lot of blood and was thought that the attack would be the first inside a British prison and the way things are going, it would not be the last (Foges 2020).

In another perspective, while examining why and how radicalisation occurs inside prisons in the UK, Ian Acheson (a former Prison Governor and the team leader of the 2015 Independent Reviewer on Islamist Extremism inside UK prisons) noted that the UK government is to be blamed for this abnormally. Arguably, Acheson is of the opinion that radicalisation could not but happen due to the failure of the UK government to effectively manage and cater for its prison system and prisoners. Specifically, he pointed to the fact that the UK government does not seem to be serious about the welfare of its prisons and this is consequently, actively, and clandestinely destroying its Criminal Judicial System. He cited a scenario where the government imposes a 20% cut on the prisons budget, meaning a 26% reduction in the number of operational frontline prison staff (Acheson, 2020b). Acheson noted that then it is not surprising why the prison staff are unable to effectively manage the prisoners as expected. Acheson disappointedly concluded that no wonder the UK prisons have become places that "make bad people worse" (ibid).

In another instance, Ian Acheson related that the current arrangements for the supervision of terrorist offenders are using structures and agencies that are philosophically and organisationally unsuitable for the management of terror threat. That is why de-radicalisation exercise of offenders is not achieving its objectives, and instead, the prison institutions are just producing ex-prisoners with terror and violent orientation (Acheson, 2020b). Acheson advised the UK government to initiate one terrorist prisoner management service, covering individualised treatment programmes, risk assessment, release decisions and resettlement supervision. In his own words, "People who go into the streets and stab strangers with impunity are in no

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conventional way rational. So, we need to step up the surveillance, treatment and protection of those whose psychological disorders may predispose them to strike" (ibid).

Importantly, the narratives of terror actors in Europe in general, and particularly in the UK have validated the challenge of a wide spread of Islamism and extremism capable of terror action in its prisons. Incidences of terror attacks in this jurisdiction in recent time have indicated prisons as veritable sites, where extremist ideas are being perpetrated. This was authenticated in an interview with Sara Khan (the lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism in the UK), who commented that "extremism in prisons had been raised as an issue during a nationwide study of all types of radicalization". "Experts and those working in prisons have raised significant concerns with me about the spread of extremist ideas and behaviours among serving prisoners" (Dearden 2018).

The social contagion theory is particularly relevant to shed more light on the recruitment of prisoners that occurs inside prisons in the UK and how communication flows and inmates' perceptions are influenced by charismatic radicals who often lure vulnerable prisoners into accepting their radical ideas while behind bars. According to Crenshaw (1981: 379–380), the social contagion theory refers to the observed phenomenon that individuals adopt the attitudes or behaviours of others in the social network in which they communicate. Crenshaw explains that individual perceptions are influenced by the perceptions of individuals in their social or friendship network. This implies that the proximity of two actors in a social network is associated with the occurrence of interpersonal influence between those actors (ibid). In other words, social contagion theory explains that behaviours and perceptions initiated by one member of the network will influence others in the network.

It can therefore be explained that the spread of Islamist ideological orientation inside UK prisons and its continuity in the country (which often leads to terror actions) has a contagious undertone, whether from a charismatic extremist leader, who often, is an inmate in the same prison, or from available literature inside prisons as well as extremist preaching from a charismatic imam

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serving in the prisons. Through these processes, socialisation and networking blossoms through communication. The idea has to be transmitted from one end to the other. No wonder Anjem Choudary, a well-known British Islamist and charismatic extremist, emphatically remarked in 2016: "If they arrest me and put me in prison…I will carry on in prison and I will radicalise everyone in prison" (MacEoin, 2016). It is important to note that the common ground of Islamists is extremism and jihadism, and they source new recruits through various channels including prisons. Significantly, Islamists and other radicals have understood the usefulness of the prison environment and committed themselves to leveraging these to recruit their victims.

It must be stated that prison radicalisation is not only identified in European prisons, nor is it peculiar to the United Kingdom. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), recognising the challenge of prison radicalisation, convened a meeting in November 2019 with the aim of addressing the risk of radicalisation behind bars and promoting rehabilitation of prisoners and their reintegration into normal society (UNSC, 2019).

The UNSC noted that the capability that terrorist threat poses by radicalised prisoners and the need to address this threat. The UNSC further remarked that Resolution 2396 (2017) on foreign terrorist fighters acknowledges that prisons "can serve as potential incubators for radicalisation to terrorism and terrorist recruitment and that proper assessment and monitoring of imprisoned foreign terrorist fighters especially, is critical to mitigate opportunities for terrorists to attract new recruits". The resolution emphasises that rehabilitation of terror actors can also occur in prisons. It further encourages member states to "develop tailored and gender-sensitive strategies in order to address and counter terrorist narratives within the prison system" (ibid). Similarly, Resolution 2482 of the UN (2019) focuses on the nexus between terrorism and organised crime and reiterates the content of Resolution 2396, recognising that prisons can be settings in which both radicalisation and rehabilitation can occur (ibid).

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3.4. The instrumentality of religion in the recruitment of inmates into violent extremism

Are there any role religion plays in the exposure of inmates to violent extremism? To some extent, based on the narratives of some terror actors in the UK, religious belief and twisting of religious content by extremist recruiters have indicated a significant role that religion plays in their recruitment process, turning them from an ordinary convicted offender into violent extremist radicals. As earlier cited, the cases of Usman Khan (Dunleavy, 2020) and Sudesh Amman (Christian, 2020) are good examples of how vulnerable individuals can become victims of religious extremism.

For this section, the description of religion as exemplified by Beckford (2011: 43) is adopted. According to Beckford, "religion has to do with beliefs, values, motivations, feelings, activities, normative codes, institutions and organisations that relate to claims about the ultimate significance or perceived wholeness of life". This aspect of human life, looking at the narratives of individuals who have been identified and convicted as violent extremists or terrorists, has influenced their decisions, not only to embrace a radical and extremist form of lslamist religious ideology, but also to engage in terror actions in the pursuit of their fundamentalist religious convictions.

3.4. Islamist terrorists and the use of "Allahu Akbar"

In advancing the above argument, it is important to examine this question: Does religion really influence Islamist terrorists or radicalised individuals? This question might attract diverse responses or explanations from different perspectives. However, in the context of this study, the researcher is concerned with the common usage of the phrase "Allahu Akbar", which is a common phrase or slogan used by terror actors before they engage in terror actions. So, what does "Allahu Akbar" mean, and why do terrorists use it before they carry out their terror act?

The phrase "Allahu Akbar" is most often translated as "God is great". Allahu Akbar is Arabic for "God is greater" or "God is greatest". The phrase, known as takbir in Arabic, is an expression of a range of moods and occasions in the Islamic world, from displays of approval and happiness to

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entreaties, and at times, propagandistic cheerleading during political rallies (Tristam, 2020). The phrase is also spoken during salat, the five-times-daily prayer of Muslims, and by muezzins as they chant the call to prayer from their minarets (ibid).

It has been used by devoted Muslims for diverse reasons and purposes. Significantly, the statement has also become commonly spoken by Islamist terrorists and radicalised individuals before they engage in terror actions. Tristam (2020) argues that the phrase has been tainted by this usage, or rather misused by Islamist extremists, Salafists, and terrorists, including the 9/11 terrorists, who carried copies of handwritten letters exhorting them to "strike like champions who do not want to go back to this world. Shout, 'Allahu Akbar' because this strikes fear in the hearts of the nonbelievers".

In another perspective, Gold (2021) contests that the phrase "Allahu Akbar" commonly features in multiple situations at different times. For instance: (i) it is repeated five times for Islamic call to prayer; (ii) it is repeated several times during prayers inside mosques; (iii) it is often used to express general approval; (iv) it is sometimes used as an expression of surprise" (like the English phrase, "Oh my God!"); (v) it is used for applause, similar to the phrase "bravo!"; and (vi) it is sometimes used as an expression of dismay or prayer in accidents or near death (Gold, 2021).

Nevertheless, Gold (2021) further argues that "Allahu Akbar" has been observed to be used often by terror actors prior to their terror strikes. For example, "Allahu Akbar" is what the 9/11 terrorists said before flying jetliners into the World Trade Center Towers, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania in 2001. "Allahu Akbar" is what traitor Nidal Hasan said before American soldiers were slaughtered at Fort Hood. "Allahu Akbar" is what the terrorists' mother said after the Boston Marathon bombings. "Allahu Akbar" is what was spray-painted on the side of the US Consulate in Benghazi. "Allahu Akbar" is what two attackers in London shouted as they used a machete to butcher a man on a public street (Gold, 2021). Further, Gold (2021) notes that the use of the phrase "Allahu Akbar" has been noted in Bukhari Sahih Hadith 5:456. In addition, "Prophet Muhammad led the Fear Prayer [Allahu Akbar] with one batch of his army while the

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other (batch) faced the enemy." Also, in Bukhari Sahih Hadith 5:516 "When Allah's Apostle fought or raided people, we raised our voices saying, 'Allahu-Akbar! Allahu-Akbar! None has the right to be worshipped but Allah'" (Gold, 2021).

While it might be difficult to grasp the significance of the usage of this phrase, within the context of the studies of Islamist terrorism and terror actions, the researcher notes that the statement has become a common slogan for Islamist terrorists prior to engaging in terror activities, notwithstanding their geographical jurisdictions or social status as well as racial descriptions. What is troubling is that they should praise God for taking innocent lives. Does it make sense to thank God or render praises to God when the lives of unarmed civilians are destroyed by terrorists who are claiming to be fighting a particular government? The common usage of the phrase shows how significant it is to those who engage in terror actions. Even though this phrase does not reflect the positive spirituality of Islamist terrorists or their comprehensive understanding of what Islamic religion is, a close observation shows that it seems useless to Islamist terrorists to engage in any terror actions without first pronouncing, "Allahu Akbar!"

3.5. Influence of religion on prisoners

Addressing how religion can influence the state of mind of people behind bars, Mulcahy et al (2013) note that many prisons are notorious for being harsh environments, and for many inmates, therefore, religion is used to cope. There is a belief that religion plays a profound and necessary role in the creation and maintenance of a moral and law-abiding community within prisons, and extremist recruiters behind the bars understand this and often leverage it to recruit their members. Silke and Veldhuis (2017) argue that religion can provide moral and social guidelines for inmates and help them make sense of their imprisonment. As such, although it is undisputed that violent extremism can create real and serious security concerns within the correctional system, most authors seem to agree that religion generally has a positive effect on inmates and that, in most prisons, radicalisation is a rare phenomenon (Silke & Veldhuis, 2017).

However, the narratives of inmates who encountered religious extremists inside negate the claim of Silke and Veldhuis in this regard. In a 2015 report on prison radicalisation in the UK, the former UK Head of the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office, Chris Phillip, claimed that staff shortages were making it harder to tackle Islamist radicalisation in England's prisons. On the other hand, the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, rejected the claim that staff shortages were hindering efforts to stop Islamic radicalisation in prisons. She added that the UK government is looking at preventative measures and that she wanted new "extremism officer" roles in prisons to deal with radicalisation (BBC News, 2015).

In addition, the relationship between religion and violent extremism is established, since religion can serve as a powerful expression of individual and group identity, particularly in situations where religious identities compete with loyalty of the state and where extremist charismatic leaders are able to exploit these dynamics (UNDP, 2017: 45). A good example is the development of European citizens' involvement in the Islamic State-motivated terrorism. Part of the processes of this development included burning the passports of those European citizens who joined the Islamic State as an indication of absolute rejection of their various European nationalities and total identification with and allegiance to the cause and vision of the Islamic State.

With regard to recruitment into violent extremism, there is consensus in much of the analyses of violent extremism that religion serves as a catalyst, often exploited by the militant/extremist groups to legitimise the use of violence as a response to a wide array of grievance (ibid). According to a study conducted by the UNDP on why young people become radicalised or joined radical groups, it was found that 40% of young people joined or became radicalised due to the religious ideas of the group they identified with (UNDP, 2017: 45). This implies that the power of religious ideas as a first response in explaining recruitment emerged strongly in the journey to violent extremism and radicalisation (ibid).

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Porter (2018) frowns at the practice of allowing informal imams to control Islamic religious activities in many British prisons. The state assumes that the presence of employed Islamic imams in British prisons will automatically solve the challenge of violent extremism and radicalisation. Porter argues that a chaplain or a prison imam, in particular, is responsible for the provision of spiritual care within the prison environment. One problem with imams provided by the State is that those appointing them often expect the so-called imams to be "spiritual advisers, welfare officers and terrorism experts all at the same time". This is an unreasonable and unrealistic expectation, which they cannot fulfil, Porter concluded. Further, Porter (2018) noted that another challenge against this assumption is the fact that prisoners in British prisons do not accord respect or honour to these imams because they are believed to be symbiotically working as spiritual advisers and surveyors of radicalisation for the state. In other words, the state assumes that these imams would be useful to survey the level of radicalisation inside the prison systems. Unfortunately, the so-called imams are not counter-terrorism or de-radicalisation experts. The assumption by the state, Porter (2018) argues that these imams would function as a panacea to radicalisation, combined with inmates' assumption that they are puppets of the state, has created a vacuum within prison pastoral care. Consequently, the gap is now filled by charismatic inmates, who are perceived to possess far more simplistic knowledge in terms of interpretation of Islamic texts in prisons.

Silke and Veldhuis (2017) noted that the role of prisons in countering violent extremism in recent years has received increasing scholarly and political priority, with prisons often being portrayed as "hotbeds" of radicalisation. As a result, researchers have devoted growing attention to examining the challenges and opportunities that arise with the presence of violent extremist offenders within prison systems (Silke & Veldhuis, 2017). This argument is equally validated by a recently published study conducted by Powis, Dixon and Woodhams (2019) in three high-security prisons in the United Kingdom. According to this study, religion is significantly instrumental in the conversion of many inmates not only to a change of attitude in a positive

direction, but also in a negative direction—in the form of gangsterism or extremism. As stated in this research finding:

> *Many inmates who embraced Islam inside prisons wanted to practice their faith peacefully and become more immersed in the scriptures of Islam as a framework to elicit change in their life and to cope with custody. The Islam "brotherhood" (as they called it in these prisons) allowed them to surround themselves with like-minded individuals with whom they had a common interest and focus. Islam is a brotherhood. When you find out someone else is religious, straightaway you are friends. You have spirituality (Powis et al, 2019: 10).*

Similarly, religious conversion inside prisons among Muslim inmates influences some inmates to embrace gang-style attitudes or become extremists. This is because prisoners usually form groups where they can connect and socialise. This form of socialisation sometimes leads to building self and group esteem and provides a shield against bullying from violent or oppressive inmates. According to Powis et al (2019), a small group of Muslim prisoners was operating as a gang under the guise of religion in three prisons in England and Wales. These prisoners were embedded within a wider Muslim group called the Brotherhood. However, unlike the Brotherhood, they had little interest in the Islamic faith, but saw membership of the Muslim gang as an opportunity to be anti-authority, violent and intimidating (Powis et al, 2019: 10). A member of the Brotherhood recalled, "One of the gang members (who was a fake Muslim) asked me why I'm not fasting...So I then asked him to name one of the pillars of Islam and he couldn't answer. They're dangerous. It's frightening. It is ignorance," he concluded (Powis et al, 2019: 10).

While religious ideologies are often expressed as a primary reason for radicalism in prison. A few other factors are also influential. This confirms the importance of finding appropriate strategies to engage with religious ideologies constructively as part of conflict resolution interventions. It also supports the notion that religion is exploited by radical groups to justify

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resorting to violence, becoming a focal point for a number of other grievances and issues. At the same time, it is clear that although religion may feature prominently in the factors that pull people to join radical groups, the level of Islamic literacy is low among those who are most vulnerable to recruitment. Therefore, understanding of the actual meaning of Islamic texts is also low (Powis, et al, 2019: 11).

3.6. Prisoners' vulnerabilities and extremists' recruitment tactics inside prisons

Some scholars have argued that mismanagement of the prison environment may accelerate the process of radicalisation of inmates. For example, Speckhard & Shajkovci (2018) argued that prisons may accelerate the process of radicalisation of inmates by virtue of having vulnerable prisoners under circumstances in which they may be potentially exposed to virulent ideologies and charismatic recruiters to whom they may fall prey inside a prison setting. According to Neumann (2010), prisons are places of vulnerability which produce identity seekers, protection seekers, and rebels in a greater number than other environments. Prison also often gives extremist a chance to regroup and preach their radical ideologies, so that many prisoners who were not radical prior to imprisonment become radicalised through the prison environment (Johnston, 2009: 3).

Bryans (2014) views prisoners' susceptibility to radical and extremist recruitment from a different perspective. Among other factors, he looks at prisoners' mismanagement and environmental space as a possible trigger that could create a platform for extremist recruiters to lure vulnerable inmates into their belief system. Bryans (2014: 2) argues that the management of violent extremist offenders in prison, for instance, brings additional challenges around each of the core functions of any prison system, and badly run prisons could create the physical and ideological space in which extremist recruiters can operate freely and, at the same time, reinforce their view that they have been treated unfairly by the state. Furthermore, Porter (2018) is of the view that prison could be a perfect breeding ground for radicalisation. He narrated that the deprivation experienced by inmates inside prisons could be manipulated by charismatic

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recruiters, who could channel these perceived humiliations of deprivation into a grander ideological narrative, thereby winning the minds of vulnerable inmates to their ideological views (Porter, 2018: 34).

Prisons can become grounds for recruitment of extremism, rather than being grounds for reformation of character towards reintegration into society. This raises critical questions on prison institutions in terms of reformation of offenders and their core responsibility of reforming convicted criminals. In an interview conducted by Anne and Ardian (2018) with Abdul Sa'adat (an ex-Palestine jihadist), Sa'adat remarked that "as long as we have prisons, we have training camps for our youth". Abdul Sa'adat, who had spent more than 17 years as a jihadist, did not in any way view that as lost time; rather, he took advantage of the situation and environment and began indoctrination and recruitment among the vulnerable prisoners with whom he found himself surrounded. According to Sa'adat, "They had gathered all our students for us". Indeed, as Anne and Ardian (2018: 1) contend, in many parts of the world, including the UK, prisons are known to serve as fertile grounds for terrorist recruitment, with terrorist leaders sometimes celebrating the fact that they can operate in an environment where their recruits are already assembled around them.

In his article, "Danger of Prison radicalisation in the West", Brandon (2009) noted that Islamists, including convicted terrorists, frequently seek to become leaders of Muslims in prison—just as they do in wider society (Brandon, 2009). He emphasised that prisoners might exploit a situation inside the prison environment to support and lure some inmates to their fold in the process. Brandon (2009) cited the examples of two UK convicted terrorists—Abu Hamza al-Masri and Abdullah el Faisal—who overtly sought to become representatives of Muslim prisoners. To accomplish this, they led demonstrations and hunger strikes against prison food or against perceived mistreatment by prison staff. El-Faisal later said that "if you're a cleric, you have to set an example for other Muslim prisoners to follow; you're not supposed to crack up under pressure" (Brandon, 2009).

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Given the above background, it is unsurprising that gangs may also flourish in prisons with competition for gang recruitments of all kinds, including extremist groups. However, not much research has been conducted on prison gangs in the United Kingdom. One study of an English high-security prison identified a large Islamist gang that had a significant negative influence on prison life and links to radicalisation and extremism (Powis et al, 2019: 3). The authors further noted that several studies have observed a rise in Islamist gangs in Western prisons, which has raised concerns about the influence that these gangs may have over other prisoners, especially where those convicted of extremist offences are instrumental in gang recruitment and leadership (ibid). As acknowledged by Powis et al (2019), there are connections between prison gangs and Islamist extremist offenders, which equally serve as a possible mechanism for transmitting extremist ideologies, although how this occurs remains poorly understood (Powis et al, 2019: 6).

Prisoners, especially those who are new to life behind bars, are vulnerable to the so-called recruiters, who might sometimes present themselves as friends or sympathisers. Daniel Porter argues that the absence of legitimate pastoral care within prison environments is worrying due to the disproportionate vulnerability of inmates to radicalisation. He emphasises that this disproportionality occurs because inmates desire to break from their history of criminal and harmful behaviour and endeavour to make up for their "sins", creating the cognitive opening that allows religious indoctrination to enable "atonement". The Salafi jihadist ideology offered by informal prison imams provides spiritual redemption from crime, yet also satiates "the personal needs and desires that initially led them to become involved in it" by rejecting the state through violent means. One may act like, but need not feel like, a criminal.

Studies on jihadist radicalisation revealed that a good number of prominent jihadists were radicalised, at least in part, in prison. As noted by James Brandon (2009), Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Mus`ab al-Zarqawi were examples of such individuals. He emphasised that extremists in the Arab world have repeatedly used prisons to recruit new followers, reinforce the commitment of existing extremists and network and exchange ideas with like-minded individuals (Brandon, 2009). In the same vein, Porter (2018) argues that of 79 European jihadists with

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criminal pasts, 57% had been incarcerated prior to their radicalisation, and at least 31% of those who had spent time in prison had been radicalised there (Porter, 2018: 34).

3.7. From criminal behaviours to radical behaviours

The nexus between criminal behaviours and terror actions in Europe, motivated through violent religious ideological orientation, has opened a fresh dimension in the study of radicalisation and transnational terrorism in the 21st century. As succinctly put by Klausen (2019), the line between jihadi and criminal underworlds has grown increasingly blurred, and this presents policymakers with a fresh set of problems (including how to solve the problem of radicalisation in prisons). Klausen emphasises that the links between jihadi hubs and Islamists are complex, as they have their connection with criminal networks (Klausen, 2019: 53).

According to scholars, terrorists have used their criminal skills and ties to criminal networks and gangs to facilitate terrorist plots (Acheson & Paul, 2019; Rushchenko, 2019; Klausen, 2019). In other words, there is a strong bond and a form of connection that links criminal behaviour and radical behaviours. This is also buttressed and further explained by Rushchenko (2019) in explaining how criminal behaviours in prisons and radicalisation that leads to terror actions are connected. According to Rushchenko (2019: 296), "prisons represent recurrent settings where criminal cooperation can grow as extremists use their conviction to find accomplices and acquire the information needed for planning another attack". It is disappointing to note that the place that is meant for the reformation of offenders is being used to breed crimes in an increasing dimension.

There is increasing evidence that prisons in the West are starting to play a similar role—particularly in the United Kingdom, which has experienced more terror actions in Europe (and consequently more terrorist convictions) than any other European country. For example, there are several extremists in the UK, including high-profile terrorists, whose paths toward terrorism began in prisons. These include Richard Reid, the 2001 shoe-bomber, Muktar Ibrahim, the leader of the 21 July 2005 London bomb plot, and Khaleid Moshood, who drove a car across

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Westminster Bridge towards Parliament in the UK in March 2017, injuring 50 people and killing 4. Moshood had an extensive criminal record, having been convicted three times since he was 18. In the year 2000, he was imprisoned for two years for a violent knife attack, and he converted to Islam and started using a new name in jail (Rushchenko, 2019: 299).

3.8. Conclusion

Prisons are places where lawbreakers and criminals are expected to become good and law-abiding individuals, rehabilitated to be integrated into a normal society. Looking at the current situation of prisons in the United Kingdom, this is not so. This chapter has attempted to broaden the debates about Islamism among prisoners in the UK and the role of prisons in the development of prisoners' radicalisation with extremist and violent features behind bars in the United Kingdom. It has been stated that even though prisons in the UK have the mandate to safeguard the public from criminals and violent individuals, punish offenders for breaking the law as well as provide offenders with the opportunity to reflect on their offences and take responsibility for their crimes and prepare them for a law-abiding life when they are released, unfortunately, prisoners in UK prisons are turning from bad to worse as extremist offenders inside the UK correctional facilities are manipulating the environments to recruit vulnerable inmates to embrace their radical ideologies and ultimately lead them into terror activities after their jail time.

This development has necessitated raising some queries regarding why and how prison institutions, with the aim of reforming offenders, are turning into recruitment centres for radicals and contributing to the recruitment of inmates who are embracing violent extremist orientation. The chapter sheds light on the shortcomings of the UK correctional institutions in their reformation responsibility and examines how charismatic Islamist inmates inside UK prisons have leveraged the environment to further their course against the peace and security of the state. As has been indicated, specific factors and channels are at play when looking at why and how

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radicalisation occurs behind bars, with cases of prisoners in the UK committing terror actions after their jail time.

Examining how and why prisoners end up embracing radical religious ideas with violent tendency can be very complex. Although crimes and law-breaking are the doorways that landed offenders in prisons, the nature of prison as a microcosm of society, where social divisions are pronounced, the deteriorating welfare conditions of UK prisoners, socialisation need of the inmates, mismanagement of offenders by prison authorities and the interest of Islamist inmates in raising new disciples with a jihadist mindset are all contributory factors responsible for luring inmates into radicalisation in prisons. Significantly, radicalisation of inmates has been pointed to as a gradual process of socialisation with contagious elements that serve as catalysts for embracing radical ideas and violent orientation.

The fact is that prison amplifies several factors that could lead to radicalisation of inmates. The forces of isolation from the outside world, need for belonging, a sense of vulnerability, and prolonged exposure of vulnerable inmates to radical individuals and extremist materials are all contributing to the proliferation of prison radicalisation in the United Kingdom. In addition, the role of charismatic Islamist offenders manipulating religion over the weak and vulnerable inmates should not be overlooked. This understanding is critical in the UK government's effort to effectively combat the challenge of radicalisation of offenders behind bars as this will stem the tendency towards terror in the country.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE UK GOVERNMENT'S POLICY RESPONSES TO RADICALISATION IN PRISONS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to investigate and analyse strategic responses and policy solutions of the UK government to the development of radicalisation and violent extremist behaviours in its prisons. Among other things, the chapter investigates the challenges of radicalisation that leads to terror actions in the UK and measures taken by policymakers in the country towards de-radicalisation of prisoners. The chapter also examines the UK government's support to HMPPS (which is shouldered with the responsibility of managing the UK correctional, rehabilitation and reform establishments) in its effort to combat radicalisation inside its prisons. In addition, the chapter analyses the effectiveness of the UK's prisoner deradicalisation programmes and their initial outcomes as well as challenges confronting effective de-radicalisation operations in prisons in the country. In this regard, secondary and primary data are critically analysed to evaluate the UK government's efforts in combating radicalisation and violent extremism in its prisons. The primary data sources used include interview responses and notes from research respondents comprising of NGOs whose work focuses on UK prisons and prisoners, academic experts on prisons, radicalisation, probation and criminal justice in the UK and UK policymakers' comments on prisons and the radicalisation problem in the country. Others include insightful responses from ex-prison officials on the state of prisons in the UK and relevant reports on UK prisons.

4.2. Islamist radicalism and ideological influence in United Kingdom

It is important to establish that there is a deep-seated ideological motivation that leads Islamist extremists and radicals to acts of terror in the United Kingdom and beyond. In 2013, a United Kingdom Task Force (shouldered with the responsibility to tackle radicalisation and extremism in the country) noted that international terrorist threats to the UK come primarily from people who are inspired by Al-Qaeda's distorted interpretation of Islam and use that as justification for

killing innocent people in the country (HM Government, 2013: 1). In other words, individuals in the UK who engage in radical Islamist behaviours and extremist attitudes leading to killing of innocent people are driven by Al-Qaeda's ideology. The question is, on what is Al-Qaeda ideology based? According to the UK government, Al-Qaeda's ideology is based on:

A distorted interpretation of Islam, which betrays Islam's peaceful principles, and draws on the teachings of the likes of Sayyid Qutb. Islamist extremists deem Western intervention in Muslim-majority countries as a "war on Islam", creating a narrative of "them" and "us". They seek to impose a global Islamic state governed by their interpretation of Shari'ah as state law, rejecting liberal values such as democracy, the rule of law and equality. Their ideology also includes the uncompromising belief that people cannot be Muslim and British and insists that those who do not agree with them are not true Muslims (HM Government, 2013: 1).

However, a closer observation reveals that the ideological basis of Islamists with characteristics of radical and extremist behaviours both in the UK and elsewhere transcends Her Majesty's Government's description. In other words, the ideological drives, and motivations of Islamist extremists for engaging in religious ideological terrorism are deeper and multi-layered in nature. A deeper consideration of the phenomenon of radical behaviours with terror incidents in European countries gives a deeper understanding of the influential role of ideology in the radicalisation processes and extremist attitudes of European citizens, not excluding radicalised individuals in the United Kingdom, whether inside or outside of prison estates. Without a doubt, extremist religious ideological influence plays a pivotal role in the radicalisation experience of some European citizens which consequently pushes them into Islamist-motivated terror actions. In this regard, a particular emphasis is placed on the Salafist ideological orientation.

What is Salafism? Salafist ideology is based on the idea of returning to the supposedly pure form of Islam practised by the successors of the founder of Islam, Mohammed, and the earliest Muslims. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State reject any later additions as bid'ah (innovation) and un-Islamic. Their doctrine allows them to proclaim any Muslims who do not embrace their ideology as *takfir* (Muslims who deviate) from their strictly defined interpretation of Islam. The penalty for heresy, according to Salafists' ideology, is death (Clarion Project, 2016). The Salafists are in

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support of war against anyone and everyone who is not like them or who is against them. Groups such as the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and the Taliban-all follow Wahabi or Salafi ideology, which is commonly opposed by other Muslims.

Al-Sudairi (2014) gives a deeper antecedent of the historical explanation of Salafism. For Al-Sudairi, Salafism, or Salafiyya, is a doctrinal and intellectual current within Islam which espouses a return to the ways of the Salaf As-Salih (the Pious Ancestors), which implies the first three generations of Muslims who lived during and after the life of the Prophet Mohammed. In his argument, Al-Sudairi stresses that the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda embrace, to a certain extent, a rejection of the madhhab (legal school) Sunni traditions that had emerged in Islam's early centuries as a relatively modern phenomenon, building on the Sunni orthodox revivals of the 18th century and the failures of traditional Muslim authorities to contend with mounting internal and external challenges, as well as the spread of new modernistic discourses (ibid).

Salafism found a popular following across many Muslim societies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Its growth was facilitated by Saudi Arabia, which embraced its own idiosyncratic brand of Salafism rooted in the mid-18th-century religious revivalism that swept Central Arabia (usually denoted by its detractors as Wahhabism after its "founder" Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab), especially after its annexation of Mecca and Medina in 1924–1925 and the subsequent influx of oil wealth, which endowed the country with the religious authority, universities, charity organisations, preachers, and communicative channels to promote this ideology globally (ibid).

In sum, the Al-Qaeda ideological drives imply promoting and initiating Europeans into Salafist ideological philosophy. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State desire to see the Salafi way of life permeate all European countries, and the best way to achieve this objective is to recruit European citizens and influence them to embrace this ideology, with the expectation that they would eventually promote this idea on the continent. Often described as being rooted in the works of the medieval scholars Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyyah, Salafism seeks to establish a more authentic religious experience predicated on a presumably correct reading of the Quran and the

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sunnah (the sayings and practices of the Prophet) and away from the supposed bid'ah (innovations) and heretical practices that have "polluted" it (Al-Sudairi, 2014).

In "Middle East Salafism's influence and the radicalization of Muslim communities in Europe", Stemmann (2006) discuss the influence of Salafi ideology on the terror attacks in European countries, including the Madrid (March 2004) and London bombings (July 2005), and further impacts of such attacks in the subsequent radicalisation of certain European citizens. The Madrid and London terrorist bombings showed that European countries are no longer just a logistics base or shelter for international terrorism but have instead become part of its main battleground (Stemmann, 2006: 1). Salafist ideology, with proselytising conducted by radical Islamist preachers, has led to the emergence of individuals capable of carrying out independent terrorist attacks in European countries, including the United Kingdom (ibid). As a matter of fact, the starting point of this phenomenon is outside of prison facilities.

In his extensive argument, Karmon (2016) claimed that European countries were waking up to Islamist terror engagements in their region. The author cited a raid conducted by 400 German police, after months of preparation conducted in July 2016 at a German-speaking Islamic Mosque, and eight apartments in Hildesheim, a town described as "a hotbed of radical Salafist" activity (Karmon, 2016). Karmon further stressed that the propagation of Islamic State's Salafist ideology is now present in Europe and the group encourages its members to carry out terrorist acts in European countries and elsewhere under this ideological influence. Salafists' aim is to eradicate the impurities introduced during centuries of religious practice of Islam's interpretations not based on the original sources of Islam, which are viewed as distortions that lead Muslims astray from the path of God. The Islamic State and Al-Qaeda uphold this point and consistently emphasise this ideological orientation to their members. Nevertheless, it should be noted that even though many Muslims are aware of this phenomenon, not all Muslims in European countries and in other jurisdictions agree or subscribe to this extremist ideological orientation.

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4.3. Radicalisation behind bars in the United Kingdom

As argued above, the intention and interest of Islamist extremists is to reach and permeate the European region with their Salafist religious ideologies, and their targeted locations in European countries include jails. Therefore, prisons in Europe have become of particular interest to Islamists. In the context of this study, reference is made to prisons in the United Kingdom. Radicalisation behind bars in the United Kingdom could be described as the process by which inmates in the country embrace and adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes (Hamm, 2013: 43).

It is important to emphasise that even though radicalisation inside prisons is currently a matter of concern to governments globally, it is actually a very old issue with consequences that can be astonishingly different in their outcomes depending on the actions of individuals who are radicalised (Hamm, 2013: 10). The point is, until after the 9/11 attacks, researchers had little interest in radicalisation behind bars, and central to this development was the discovery of an Al-Qaeda training manual entitled "Military Studies in the Jihad (Holy War) Against the Tyrants". This training manual was seized by the United Kingdom counter-terrorism police in the year 2000, during a raid carried out on a Safe House in Manchester in the United Kingdom. This event was commonly known in intelligence circles as the Manchester document, and the manual identified Western prisoners as candidates for conversion to Islam because they are capable of harbouring hostility toward their governments (Hamm, 2013: 43). This brings prisons to the hearts of Al-Qaeda members. Similarly, during a September 2000 interview on an Arab-language television station, Osama bin Laden issued a call for jihad to release the "brothers in jails (prisons) everywhere" (ibid: 43).

Prisons do not exist in a vacuum. They exist because society decided that they should be used as a method of responding to crimes (UKEssays, 2018). Although prisons are meant to serve as incubators of peaceful change and reformation of inmates, they have played an enormous role in the radicalisation narratives of radical and militant movements in modern time (Neumann, 2010:

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7). Given the sensitivity of this development and considering the security threat posed by radicals and violent extremists to the stability, security and peace of the country, de-radicalising inmates with extremist orientation has become a major focus of the activities of HMPPS, formerly known as the National Offender Management Service (Dawson and Godec, 2017).

In recent years, prisons have been noted as environments where radical ideas that lead to terror actions are being incubated. The narratives of terror incidents in European countries, and particularly in the United Kingdom, confirm this assertion. The number of prisoners in prison for violent extremist and terrorist offences is believed to be increasing globally, and prisons in the UK are not excluded from this development. There are concerns that such prisoners may spread extremist ideologies among the prison population and that radicalised detainees would engage in extremist activities on release (Penal Reform International, 2015: 2). Hence, the need to pay more attention to the treatment of radicalised prisoners in a way that promotes public safety has become a defining issue for the UK government, HMPPS, NGOs and the general public, who have seen the impact of prisoners' radicalisation upon their release from custody.

As Olimpio (2019) noted, in most Western countries, including the UK, prisons have long represented hubs for radicalisation, where radicalised individuals can establish ties with each other, engage in proselytising and recruit other inmates (Olimpio, 2019). This is notable in prisons where there is a general challenge of overcrowding. The need to socialise and communicate with like-minded individuals in this kind of setting is a pull factor that opens doors for radicalisation. For many inmates, especially the vulnerable ones, socialising is necessary to keep up with the expected and unexpected challenges within the prison environment.

4.4. The connection between terror attacks in the UK and prisons

As Acheson and Paul (2019: 102) noted, the main security threat in the UK currently emanates from groups or individuals inspired or directed by Islamist extremism. Since the 7/7 London bombing in 2005, there have been a significant number of terror actions against UK citizens and residents, ranging from carefully orchestrated incidents by groups of terrorists to opportunistic

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attacks by radicalised lone actors (ibid). Echoing the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) statement, Acheson and Paul (2019) argued that there were more foiled, failed and attempted terror attacks on the UK than any other country in Europe (Acheson and Paul, 2019: 98). Emphasising the conclusion of the UK security intelligence services, Acheson also claims that the current security threat in the UK stemming from international terrorism is currently classified as "severe", which implies that a terror attack is highly likely to happen in the country (Acheson and Paul, 2019: 98).

Significantly, it has been observed that several terror perpetrators in the UK in recent years have had a form of social connection with a particular extremist radical, with the perpetrators having been radicalised or become deeper in extremist ideology while serving jail time (Acheson and Paul, 2019: 102). Some of these attackers perpetrated terror actions inside prisons in the UK, while others engaged in terror actions after their release. Terror incidents perpetrated within prisons in the UK and their perpetrators include the following:

Terror attacks carried out by radicalised inmates within and outside UK prisons between 2016 and 2020

Date	Name of prisoner	Prison's name	Instrument/nature of attack
26/08/2016	Naweed Ali	Unspecified prison in England	Knives
26/08/2016	Khobaib Hussain	Unspecified prison in England	Firearms
26/08/2016	Mohibur Rahman	Unspecified prison in England	explosives
22/03/ 2017	Khalid Moshood	Westminster attack with car roaming and knife attack	Norfolk, Wayland, Lewes and Ford prisons
03/07/2019	Naweed Ali	Unspecified prison	Knife stabbing
10/10/ 2019	Saffiya Amira Shaikh	Uunspecified prison in	Plotting to bomb St 'Paul's

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		England	Cathedral Church through suicide attack
29/11/ 2019	Usman Khan	Whitemoor prison	A frenzied knife attack in Central London.
09/01/2020	Baz Hockton	Whitemoor prison	Prison staff knives attack
09/01/2020	Brusthom Ziamani	Whitemoor prison	Prison staff knives attack
02/02/2020	Sudesh Amman	Belmarsh prison	Streatham stabbing with knives
13/02/2020	Xeneral Imiuru No	Winchester prison	Prison staff knife attack
22/06/ 2020	Khairi Saadallah	Bullingdon Prison	Knife stab attack at Reading Park, killing three men

The above incidents of terror and their perpetrators have raised a number of queries in relation to prisons and terrorism. In the first place, how were the perpetrators able to access the weapons used for these attacks? Second, do these terror attacks indicate that something is specifically wrong at UK prisons' gates? Moreover, if forbidden materials could find entry into prisons and consequently reach prisoners, could it not also imply that something is not right with the security intelligence of prisons in the United Kingdom? Also, what monitoring mechanisms exist to filter specific materials that are allowed or prohibited inside prison estates?

Multiple terror attacks in the United Kingdom in which the attackers were known to have spent time inside prisons in the country have led to an increased public outcry, challenging the government to investigate and examine the root causes and channels of radicalisation and violent extremism as well as terror ideas incubated in the country's correctional systems. Unlike in the past, when the media would excuse radical and extremist behaviours within prisons and treat these as gang violence or mental disorderliness; sporadic terror attacks in Europe generally, and particularly in the United Kingdom, have caught the interest of the government and the public,

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urging the government to take necessary steps with the aim of combating the upstream of radical ideas and violent extremist orientation inside prisons. For example, Sudesh Amman and other terror perpetrators mentioned above became radicalised while serving time inside UK prisons. Sudesh Amman's mother stated that the time he spent inside prison had her son radicalised (Christian, 2020).

Similarly, Dunleavy (2017) argues that Khalid Moshood (the 2017 Westminster terror attacker) also became radicalised while in prison. Dunleavy stressed that Moshood's troubles started in 1983, when he was arrested for property damage and later spent at least two periods in three different prisons in the UK; it was while he was in prison that he became radicalised. Although in his argument, Dunleavy (2020) did not give detail of the situations that surrounded the radicalisation of Khalid Moshood, he gives information on the general conditions that explain susceptibility of inmates to Islamist radicalisation. With reference to prisons in the United Kingdom, Dunleavy claims that susceptibility to Islamist radicalisation and violent extremist ideas behind bars is connected to the availability of extremist literature.

Dunleavy (2020) further argues that there are literature and materials such as the Islamic State-inspired magazine in these jails as well as the influence of charismatic Islamist inmates, who exert undue influence on vulnerable inmates within the prison estates (ibid). Dunleavy lamented that terrorists do not fear prison time; indeed, for many of them, prisons embolden their commitment to jihad, and often, they are the catalysts in recruiting and radicalising other inmates to their twisted beliefs. Dunleavy concluded that this is a big challenge for European countries, especially the United Kingdom, because where else should terror actors be put, if not inside prisons? Unfortunately, terror actors continue to do more harm, even when they are incarcerated (ibid). Looking at the threat terror offenders and violent extremists pose to peace and security in the UK and elsewhere, government authorities in these jurisdictions need to pay strategic attention to their prison systems.

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The development of Islamist-motivated terror attacks in the United Kingdom, especially where the attackers have social connection behind bars, is evidence of the failure and incapacitation of the UK prison system to tackle the issues of radicalisation behind bars and clamp down on Islamist extremist ideas among its inmates. This development equally reveals how difficult it is to predict disengagement of the so-called deradicalised inmates from extremist orientations. In addition, it shows that there is high tendency for a radicalised prisoner to engage in terror actions once such an individual can do so, even though such a prisoner might have passed through government deradicalisation programmes while serving jail time. In his lamentation, Dunleavy (2021) concludes that counter-terrorism officials and prison administrators have long understood that prison walls are not capable of preventing terrorists from acting or exerting their influence within the prison estate.

4.5. An overview of UK prisons and government's efforts against prison radicalisation

According to a 2019 Institute for Government report on UK prisons, there are 117 prisons in England and Wales. The running of most of these prisons is done by HMPPS, with no fewer than 104 prisons under its jurisdiction, while three private companies operate 13 prisons: G4S and Sodexo manage four prisons each and Serco manages five (Institute for Government 2019). One report by the Institute for Government on prisons in the UK also stated that there has been a dramatic deterioration in the state of prisons across England and Wales since 2009/2010, including major challenges such as overcrowding (Institute for Government, 2019).

As stated by Acheson (2016: 5), prisons in the United Kingdom have a long history of coping with terrorists and political and religious extremists. For example, Cuthbertson (2004) noted that the use of prisons as a means of recruiting new members into terrorist organisations while providing advanced training to existing members is hardly a new phenomenon. For more than 30 years, European countries have been beset by a variety of nationalist and leftist terrorist groups, some of them highly sophisticated organisations with large rosters of combat and support personnel (Cuthbertson, 2004). However, it should be noted that besides the phenomenon of

Islamist extremism and recruitment of inmates into radical ideology within prison establishments in the UK, there has also been a massive rise in incidents of violence and other disturbances within the establishments. These include incidents of barricades and prevention of access within the prisons, hostage incidents, concerted indiscipline as well as incidents of barrier-scaling (Institute for Government, 2019).

According to a 2019 Institute for Government Report on UK prisons, there were instances where prisoners used physical barriers to deny access to all or part of a prison, including prisoners holding people against their will within prison premises. In addition, concerted indiscipline among inmates was common, involving two or more prisoners refusing to comply with instructions or rules given by the establishment. Similarly, there were disturbing incidents of prisoners climbing over bars, the roof or on netting within prison facilities (Institute for Government, 2019). All these point to the fact that prisons in the UK are full of challenges, even though these challenges prompted the government to take resolving actions, prison performance in the UK still continues to deteriorate (Institute for Government, 2019).

Management of normal prisoners within a prison system is already a huge responsibility for prison establishments in general, as they are required to provide basic human rights services and welfare to inmates, including security and orderliness as well as ensuring decorum within the prison environment. Most of the time, these duties pose their own challenges to prison staff, as undertaking these duties could attract unprecedented challenges. On the other hand, managing prisoners who have committed violent extremist offences and hold radical ideas places a greater dimension of responsibility and higher demands on prison establishments.

The above situations describe prison establishments' responsibility in the UK, particularly in this era when violent extremism and radicalism are being proliferated behind bars. As mentioned earlier, prior to the incidents of terror in London in late November 2019 and early February 2020, the UK government had understood the challenging state of its prison system. This understanding led to the 2016 UK Prisons Review initiated by Michael Gove and coordinated by

a team led by Ian Acheson (a former UK Prison Governor) (Acheson, 2016). Acheson and his team were tasked with the responsibility to conduct a review on the threat posed by Islamist extremism within the United Kingdom's prisons, the probation services, and the youth justice system (Acheson, 2016).

As mentioned earlier, the challenges of coping with violent extremism within prisons in the UK today have a long history. To be sure, prisons in the United Kingdom have been confronted with diverse challenges related to managing violent offenders dating back to the 1800s. For example, in 2016, then Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss (referring to the British prison reform effort in 1800) remarked that "In 1819, the social reformer, Elizabeth Fry, returned from a tour of violent and squalid prisons in England and Wales and branded them as "the nurseries of crime" (Truss, 2016). In other words, prisons in England and Wales have been known for more than 200 years as environments where criminal activities have been nurtured. Hence, it is not a surprise to see the deteriorating state of UK prisons in the 21st century.

Nevertheless, it is problematic that the UK prisons are still known as environments where criminality is bred, including terrorist ideas among inmate populations. It also implies that the United Kingdom is lagging behind its counterparts in Europe such as the Netherlands and Norway, whose prison systems have become good examples of running a prison establishment in Europe (Life in Norway, 2018). Elizabeth Truss underscored the need for reform of UK prisons, when she remarked that "the better the actual state of our prisons is known and understood…the more clearly all men would see the necessity of these arrangements by which they may be rendered as schools of industry and virtue" (Truss, 2016).

4.6. The UK government's support for HMPPS against radicalisation in prisons

The 2015 review exercise of prisons in the UK found evidence that Islamist extremism was a growing problem within prison estates in the UK. As a result, a central, comprehensive, and coordinated strategy was required to monitor and counter the upstream of radical extremism

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among inmates (Ministry of Justice, 2016b). Her Majesty's Ministry of Justice Report concluded that Islamist ideology in prisons has become a threat in various ways, including: existence of Muslim gang culture and consequent violence; charismatic Islamist prisoners acting as self-styled imams inside prisons and radicalising vulnerable Muslim inmates; Islamist inmates' aggressive encouragement of conversion to Islam; availability of educational materials in promoting Islamist extremism; and exploitation of staff's fear of being labelled as racists (Ministry of Justice, 2016). Consequent to these findings, the Prison Review team recommended a considerable containment of known extremist individuals within dedicated specialist centres, otherwise known as separation units. This led to the creation of what are generally called separation units or centres within specific prisons in the UK (Ministry of Justice 2016).

4.6.1. The UK government's specific supports for HMPPS

In its effort to combat radicalisation and violent extremism, the UK government provided the following support to aid HMPPS in counterterrorism and radical ideology within prison and probation services (Home Office and Ministry of Justice, 2020):

• Doubling the number of counter-terrorism specialist probation staff. These specially trained staff will deliver a set of new, intensive national standards for managing terrorists on licence. These new standards will mean terrorists are subjected to closer monitoring and reporting requirements.

• An increase in the number of specialist-psychologists and specially trained imams, who play a vital role in assessing risk and challenging the beliefs of radicalised offenders.

• An increase in the resources dedicated to training front-line prison and probation staff, who are the first line of defence in identifying and challenging extremism in prisons and probation

• In addition, the UK Home Office and Ministry of Justice provided police and probation officers the resources needed to investigate and track violent offenders.

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•   The introduction of tougher sentences and the launch of major reviews into how offenders are managed after they are released.

•   Review of support provided for terror victims and their families to make sure they receive the help they need.

•   Funding of £906 million for counter-terrorism policing in 2021, which is a £90 million increase from 2020 budget to 2021. This funding is aimed at supporting and maintaining the ongoing counterterrorism policing investigations and ensuring a swift and effective response to terrorist incidents across the country, irrespective of where they take place (Home Office and Ministry of Justice, 2020).

To assist HMPPS to effectively combat radicalisation behind bars, the UK government provided and initiated specific support services and strategies that would aid prison management in its prisoner management against radicalisation. These strategies and provisions include provision of separation centres/units within prisons for terror offenders, recruitment of more prison staff, specialised training for prison staff, longer sentences for offenders with terror offences as well as introduction of programmes towards prevention of recruitment of vulnerable inmates into radical ideas and deradicalisation of inmates with radical ideologies. It is important to stress the provision of separation centres/units for terror offenders as this plays a role in the deradicalisation efforts of HMPPS.

An independent review was launched into the ways different agencies, including police, the probation service, and the security services investigate, monitor, and manage terrorist offenders. This is called Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and is coordinated by Jonathan Hall QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation. Both HMPPS and the Home Office Joint Extremism Unit (JEXU) were jointly established in April 2017 to be the strategic centre for all counter-terrorism work in prison and probation and have oversight of delivery across the end-to-end offender management process. Prisoners identified as being of

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extremist concern, or who have shown signs of being vulnerable to extremism, are managed actively as part of a comprehensive case management process (Buckland, 2019).

Robert Buckland further noted that over 22 000 prison staff have received specialist extremism awareness training to enable them to identify, report and challenge extremist views. Besides, HMPPS also employs multi-faith chaplaincy teams in all prisons, whose role it is to provide support and guidance and to challenge inappropriate behaviour within the establishment (ibid). To further help offenders rehabilitate and disengage from extremism and terrorism, the UK Secretary of State for Justice Robert Buckland claimed that JEXU has rolled out a theological intervention programme, involving a group of chaplains who are receiving specialised training and ongoing support to lead this important capability. Robert Buckland concluded that two Separation Centres have been opened for those individuals whose extremist risk cannot be managed effectively in the mainstream prison population, as a safeguarding measure to protect prisoners from terrorist and extremist influences, and to reduce the ongoing risk they present to national security despite their imprisonment (Buckland, 2019).

4.7. The UK legislation against terrorist and violent extremist offenders

Following the November 2019 and February 2020 terror attacks in London perpetrated by newly released prisoners Sudesh Amman and Usman Khan, the UK government initiated specific legislation to tackle the problem of violent extremism and radical ideology behind bars in the country. As reported by Danny Shaw (a UK Home Affairs Correspondent), the UK Justice Secretary has initiated new legislation which would apply to both current and future offenders as well as serving prisoners (Shaw, 2020), and it consists of the following:

•   It introduces tougher sentences for the most serious terrorist offenders and a 14-year minimum for the worst terrorist offenders.

•   It removes the possibility of any early release from custody for serious dangerous terrorist offenders who receive an Extended Determinate Sentence (EDS).

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- It introduces measures to strengthen licence supervision for terrorist offenders, with longer periods on licence following release.

- It introduces polygraph testing for terrorist offenders on licence (Shaw, 2020).

The UK Ministry of Justice added that serious terror offences would attract extended sentences, which require an offender to be referred to the Parole Board before they can be considered for release before the end of their sentence (Ministry of Justice, 2020b). The worst cases would receive life sentences and may never be released. In addition to the Bill, the UK government will ensure that when a terrorist offender is released, he will be subject to robust safeguards, which could include notification requirements, restrictions on travel and communications, and imposed curfews (ibid).

The report added that these new rules also apply to offenders sentenced for crimes such as training for terrorism, membership of a proscribed organisation, and the dissemination of terrorist publications; and the move will also end current automatic halfway release for offenders, who receive standard determinate sentences (ibid). Instead, they will be spending a minimum of two-thirds of their term behind bars before being referred to the Parole Board for consideration. By implication, this means that around 50 terrorist prisoners already serving affected sentences will see their automatic release halted (ibid). As stated by Justice Secretary Robert Buckland,

No dangerous terrorist should be released automatically only to go on to kill and maim innocent people on our streets, enough is enough. This government will do whatever it takes to keep the public safe, including making sure no terror offender is released early without a thorough risk assessment by the Parole Board. And we are not stopping there. We are stepping up deradicalisation measures in our prisons, introducing a 14-year minimum for the worst terrorist offenders, and giving more money to the police to deal with these horrific crimes (ibid).

Buttressing the commitment of the UK Ministry of Justice to solve the problem of radicalism and violent extremism, Home Secretary Priti Patel asserted that the UK government is determined to
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ensure that dangerous terrorists are not free to spread their hateful ideologies or harm the public, the government is boosting funding for counter-terrorism police and victims of terrorism, and this legislation will ensure terrorist offenders are not released early, unless there has been a full assessment of the risks (ibid).

4.8. Criticisms against the new UK legislation on terrorism and violent offences

Since 2005, most offenders serving sentences for violent offences have been released automatically at the halfway point, serving the rest of their sentence outside of prison. However, the new UK legislation against acts of terror and violent extremist behaviours has put an end to this practice. The new legislation implies that existing and future UK offenders convicted on counts of terrorism and other violent offences, including those who are currently due for release halfway through their sentence, would now face more years in prison. In other words, a violent offender or terror prisoner would now have to serve his whole sentence behind bars before he is finally released.

The Justice Secretary, Robert Buckland emphasised the importance and necessity of this development, which is to build citizens' trust and confidence in the justice system of the United Kingdom. Buckland further argued that "time and again, victims tell me that they feel let down by a system that can see violent and sexual offenders back on the streets, after serving just half their sentence…So, we will now end the automatic halfway release for these offenders— ensuring that punishment truly fits the crime and restore the public's faith in the justice system."

Meanwhile, there have been criticisms from human rights activists in response to the emergency legislation against terror and radical extremist behaviours within and outside prison. As reported in *The Guardian* (2020), Clare Collie (the UK Director of Civil Liberties and Human Rights Group) questioned the legality of the retrospective change (that is the cancellation of halfway release of prisoners). Collier argued that the government's response to the November 2019 and February 2020 terror attacks in London is a cause of increasing concern about civil liberties in the UK (*The Guardian*, 2020: 5). Collier emphasised that, from the January 2020 lie detector

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proposal to the changing of prisoners' sentences retrospectively, continuous introduction of measures without review or evidence is dangerous and will create more problems than it solves. Collier lamented that it is clear the UK's counter-terror system is in chaos and desperately needs proper scrutiny and review (ibid).

In the wake of the November 2019 and February 2020 terror attacks in London, which were linked to newly released prisoners, Richard Burgon, the Shadow Justice Secretary, directed his criticism at the new legislation by calling the attention of the UK government, particularly the Ministry of Justice, to the state of prisons and probation services across the country (*The Guardian*, 2020: 5). Burgon raised questions over the effectiveness of rehabilitation in prisons and monitoring of terror suspects in the community. Buttressing his concern, Burgon emphasised that the government's priority must be to keep the public safe; and to be clear, the government could not use longer sentencing as a way of distracting from their record of bringing the criminal justice system to breaking point (*The Guardian*, 2020: 5).

In the same vein, Joanna Jerry (the Justice and Home Affairs Spokesperson for the Scottish National Party at Westminster) expressed her concerns over difficulties associated with retrospective altering of legislation (*The Guardian*, 2020: 5). With the introduction of the new legislation initiated by the UK Ministry of Justice, Cherry wondered if the Justice Secretary, Robert Buckland, could give the public an assurance that the usual legal difficulties with retrospective legislation have been addressed to his satisfaction (ibid). In response, Buckland argued that the changes in the legislation relate to the administration of a sentence and not to its length. In her response, Cherry argued that it has been reported from No 10 that the system for dealing with terrorism in the UK has significant problems due to the shocking influence of lawyers on policy (ibid).

By and large, it is important to note that extremist behaviours and ideologies within and outside prisons require a criminal justice response, as a part of an overall strategy to counter radical ideological attitudes that often lead to terror actions and that is why the UK Ministry of Justice

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has responded with emergency legislation. It is worth mentioning, however, that while it is not wrong to initiate legislation towards solving the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism, as well as to punish perpetrators of terror attacks and their accomplices, it is equally and significantly required to look deeper into the societal forces that influence and lure victims of radicalism and extremism into these actions in the first place. It should be stated that it is not enough to promulgate a set of legislation with the hope that it would directly or indirectly bring change to incarcerated individuals or terror perpetrators. Assuming it does what of other radicalised members and potential terror members who are waiting for the right time to strike?

4.9. UK government responses to radicalisation and violent extremism

At the end of March 2019, official statistics indicated that there were 223 prisoners who had been accused of extremism-related offences (Acheson & Paul, 2019). Of these, 197 were convicted and 26 were awaiting trial or sentence. This represents a slight fall after a pattern of steady increase between 2013 and 2017. 80% of those imprisoned were motivated by Islamist ideologies, 13% by far-right ideologies, and the remainder had varying motivations across the political and ideological spectrum (Acheson & Paul, 2019).

More than ever, the above concerns presented the UK government with the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of its citizens and residents from the onslaught of terrorism as well as the obligation to provide rehabilitation and reintegration support to radicalised prisoners. So, the question is: how has the UK government responded to combat radicalisation and violent extremist challenges outside and within prisons? In other words, what measures has the UK government put in place to solve the continuous challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism without and inside its prisons? The UK government's efforts to combat radicalisation within and outside prisons include establishment of Counter Terrorism Strategies (CONTEST) (with the Prevent strategy as its major strand), Joint Extremism Unit (JEXU), the Healthy Identity Intervention (HII), the Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP), the creation

of separation centres or units within specific prisons, and the Ibaana counter-radicalisation strategy.

4.9.1. Prevent: A strand of CONTEST

The long-term strategy of the UK government for countering transnational and home-grown terrorism is known as CONTEST, and it is divided into four principal strands: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Of the four strands, much emphasis and focus has been placed on Prevent, which is the UK government's current counter-terrorism strategy concerning pre-criminal space. The Prevent strategy later metamorphossed into a UK Counter Extremism Bill. The strategy employed under Prevent has undergone radical changes since its initial inception under the UK Labour government. The Prevent strategy is now regarded as a statutory requirement for all public bodies as part of the UK Counterterrorism and Security Act, established in 2015. The stated objectives of the Prevent strategy include the following:

• to tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism

• to safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early identification, early stage, and intervention where appropriate, and early, proportionate and continuing support

• to enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

• to fight against the spread of radicalisation and deradicalise both ordinary inmates and those who are known for violent extremist orientation within the prison estates

4.9.2. Prevent strategy extended to UK prisons

Following the 2015 *Charlie Hebdo* terrorist attacks in Paris, the UK government under Theresa May decided to extend Prevent to UK prisons. Grimwood (2016) argued that the Prevent duty we have introduced covers prisons as well as other public-sector institutions:

That review has, I believe, yet to report, so there is a piece of work ongoing to look at what is happening in prisons. My Right Hon. Friend, the Minister for Security, will soon be meeting the

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prisons minister to talk about these issues, because we do recognise that we need to look at what is happening in prisons and ensure that we are taking every possible step to reduce the potential for radicalisation (Grimwood, 2016: 9).

Generally, Prevent has been met with criticism among government officials and other stakeholders in the United Kingdom. Their main point of concern is whether Prevent, as the UK counter-terrorism strategy, is really achieving its objectives or not. For example, in 2011, the then UK Secretary of State for the Home Department argued that Prevent, as inherited from the previous government, was full of flaws. He contested that Prevent has failed to confront the extremist ideology at the heart of the threat the United Kingdom faces and, in its efforts, to reach those at risk of radicalisation. Funding against radicalisation sometimes even reached the very extremist organisations that Prevent should have been confronting in the first place. Therefore, there is need to review the programme (HM Government, 2011).

The point is, even though the UK government has extended its counter-terrorism programmes to its prisons against the tide of radicalisation and violent extremism, the UK's disengagement and deradicalisation programmes have caused debate and controversy in recent years. This is due to the fact that not everyone agrees with the ways the Prevent strategy is being run in the country. Specifically, the strategy is being criticised for profiling the Muslim communities in the UK. However, there are also opposing arguments claiming that the Prevent strategy is actually achieving its objectives, turning away hundreds of people who were on the verge of being radicalised. The fact that the security strategy is achieving success is a major factor that causes it to attract criticism. However, although the UK government has extended Prevent to its prisons, its impact on prisoners is not yet known and needs to be explored. The question is: how has Prevent fared since its inception in terms of countering radicalisation within and outside of prisons? With mounting criticisms against the Prevent strategy and its implementation, the UK government would need to review the manner of its implementation and see what needs to be fixed to effectively achieve its objectives.

4.9.3. Joint Extremism Unit (JEXU)

Another response of the UK government to combat the menace of radicalisation in the country was the establishment of JEXU. This unit was initiated in 2017 under the coordination of HMPPS and the Home Office (Buckland, 2019). The aim of JEXU was to serve as the strategic centre for all counter-terrorism work in prison and probation services and to have oversight of service delivery across the length and breadth of offenders' management process (ibid). In addition, JEXU has the duty to provide de-radicalisation support services to prisoners identified as being of extremist concern, or who have shown signs of being vulnerable to extremism. These individuals are to be managed actively as part of a comprehensive case management process within the prison establishment (ibid).

4.9.4. Healthy Identity Intervention (HII)

The HII is a psychologically informed programme that primarily seeks to reduce or manage offenders' risk of committing extremist offenses (including extremist violence) in custody and in the community. The intervention was developed by Monica Llyod after the 7/7 terrorist bombing attack in London. It was formally introduced into the UK prisons in 2012 as a flexible programme offered to offenders on a one-to-one basis, which involved inputs from psychologists and probation officers.

HII specifically focuses on the twin goals of reducing an individual's preparedness to offend on behalf of an extremist group, cause, or ideology and changing the individual's relationship with an extremist group, cause, or ideology (especially those aspects that contribute to harm). Addressing and working with identity issues is central to HII. The programme incorporates components that are alike and distinct from components in programmes that are used to prevent other types of offending. To encourage consistent and effective delivery, the programme uses manuals that outline the aims, delivery principles, underlying theory, suggested session plans, management processes, etc. It is delivered by psychologists and probation officers who tailor the

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intervention's content to the specific assessed risks, needs, strengths, and circumstances of each participant.

Whether the programme is deemed successful is based on the extent to which the risk has changed, or protective factors are identified for everyone. Examples of areas the intervention focuses on include addressing personal identity issues, facilitating disillusionment with involvement, managing feelings associated with identification and group conflict, and challenging the legitimacy of violence to achieve political and social change.

So, what is the result of HII? As reported by a UK Home Affairs correspondent, Casciani (2020), the Ministry of Justice is yet to complete any work to test whether the HII prevents reoffending or successfully tackles extremist behaviour. Echoing the comment of Christopher Dean (a co-initiator of the programme), HII could not be currently tested like other rehabilitation programmes because there were too few offenders to get a scientifically robust assessment of what works and what does not (Casciani, 2020).

4.9.5. Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP)

According to a UK Home Affairs report documented by Grierson (2019a), Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP) started in October 2016 as an arm of Prevent, targeting all forms of terrorism and terrorism-related offenders released from prison on probation licence. The programme provides a range of intensive, tailored interventions and practical support designed to tackle the drivers of radicalisation around universal needs for identity, self-esteem, meaning and purpose and to address personal grievances that the extremist narrative has exacerbated (ibid). In addition, the programme also covers returnees from conflict zones such as Syria and Iraq as well as individuals who are subject to terrorism prevention and investigation measures (TPIMs) (ibid) —in other words, individuals who are deemed as threats but cannot be prosecuted or deported as they are foreign nationals.

The DDP recognises that disengagement from extremism involves more than ideology, so the programme offers mentoring, family support and other personal help alongside the theological

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input. Within the DDP, it is emphasised that there is no set formula for disengagement from extremism; it is usually a gradual process, and given various cases of individuals in the programme, it requires resources, time, and patience (Grierson, 2019b).

By and large, the DDP, as a UK deradicalisation and prevention programme, focuses on rehabilitating individuals who have been involved in terrorism or terrorism-related activity and reducing the risk they pose to the UK communities (Gov.uk, 2019). The DDP works by providing tailored interventions which encourage individuals to stop participating in terrorism-related activity (desist) and to move away from terrorist ideology and ways of thinking (Gov.uk, 2019). In addition, the programme aims at addressing the root causes of terrorism, building resilience, and contributing towards the deradicalisation of individuals (ibid).

As reported by Gov.uk (2019), a prison strand of the DDP was established in December 2018, targeting individuals convicted of Terrorism Act (TACT) or TACT-related offences or those who are identified by prison staff as exhibiting extremist behaviour. The DDP provides a range of intensive, tailored interventions and practical support designed to tackle the drivers of radicalisation. Provision of support under the programme could include providing mentorship assistance, psychological, theological, and ideological practical support to individuals. These interventions are designed to put in place protective factors and provide the best possible means for individuals to disengage from terrorism and reintegrate safely back into normal society (ibid).

Due to the security sensitivity of the DDP, the Home Office is yet to release any information on how successful the programme has been so far. It is also argued that the DDP is still a relatively new programme, and it can take time to figure out what works and what does not, especially with given that each case is unique and there are different needs that require a tailored approach. Hence, at this point, little information exists in the public domain on the programme. In March 2021, Jonathan Hall, who is responsible for monitoring the UK counter-terrorism legislation, concluded in a report that no one knows whether the DDP is effective or not (Dunleavy, 2021).

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4.9.6. Ibaana counter-extremism programme

In 2014, the Prime Minister's Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism proposed the Ibaana programme as part of the deradicalisation and counter-terrorism initiatives of the UK government. The Ibaana counter-extremism programme was designed to target several prisoners with entrenched Islamist extremism's views. Under the Ibaana programme, one-to-one sessions were planned for extremist prisoners over several hours with a trained Muslim chaplain, who would use the platform to engage, interact and challenge the theological arguments used by the so-called radical Islamist prisoners to justify their extremist views. Through the Ibaana programme, the Prime Minister's Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism intended that appropriately recruited Muslim Prison Chaplains would be able to challenge the extremist views of Islamist prisoners and provide them with correct religious direction away from misinterpretation of Islamic practices. Unfortunately, the programme was eventually cancelled in 2015. According to Casey (2016), both the government's Prevent and Ibaana counter-extremism programmes were heavily criticised as being ineffective, and consequently, the Ibaana counter-extremism programme was cancelled in July 2015 (Casey, 2016).

4.9.7. Creation of separation centres or "jails within jails"

In its efforts to crack down on Islamist radicalisaation behind bars, the UK government created specialised units within the high-security prisons and legislated against terror-related offences based on the 2017 Prison Amendment Rules (SI 2017/560). The 2017 Prison Amendment Rules were linked to special offences such as terror offences and violent extremist behaviours. They also provided a special separation regime for extremist and radical prisoners (Hill, 2018). These separation centres or units are regarded as jails within jails and are located in three prisons in the United Kingdom, namely Frankland prison in Durham, Full Sutton prison near York and Woodhill prison in Milton Keynes (HM Ministry of Justice, 2017). The three separation centres can hold up to 28 of the most subversive offenders, including radical Islamists such as Michael Adebolajo and Anjem Choudary. Emphatically, the main idea of the separation units is to allow

greater separation and specialised management of extremist radicals who pose the highest risk to other prisoners within the prison estate (HM Ministry of Justice, 2017). Prisoners can also be placed in these separation centres if they are involved in planning terror actions or are considered to pose a risk to national security. Furthermore, those who are spreading views that might encourage or influence others to commit terror crimes, or anyone whose views are being used in a way that undermines good order and security in prisons may also be placed in any of these centres (HM Ministry of Justice, 2017).

4.10. Challenges confronting effective deradicalisation programmes in UK prisons

The terror incidence in London has raised many questions regarding the effectiveness of prisons' rehabilitation, reformation and deradicalisation of offenders. UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson noted that while deradicalisation can work, there are few instances of it doing so (*The Guardian*, 2020: 7). In other words, for Boris Johnson, the result of these programmes is currently weak. As Pajaziti (2015) asserted, "The question of what works and what does not within the de-radicalisation/disengagement programme of a country remains just as blurry as factors that fuel the radicalisation processes (Pajaziti, 2015: 115). Hence, this section aims at looking into some of the challenges confronting effective deradicalisation programmes in the United Kingdom, especially in connection with its prisons. It is important to state that although the focus of this section is to examine this within the prison system of the UK, analyses in this regard necessitate consideration of social, economic, and political issues outside the prison estates. These include poor responses from the UK government, late resistance of the UK security and intelligence services against extremism, hard-line government approach in countering radicalisation, negligence of community approach to counter-extremism, operational inconsistencies of the UK government in the coordination of deradicalisation programmes, as well as the UK government's policy errors.

4.10.1. Negligence of UK policymakers in combating Islamist extremism at infant stage

First, it is important to examine the attitude of the UK government to extremism and radical Islamist behaviours in years past when extremism in the country was at its infant stages. This is significant because the radicalised inmates in today's UK prisons are products of the communities. Hence, there is a form of carryover from outside the prison into the prison, which directly or indirectly makes deradicalisation efforts within the prison system ineffective. The negligence of the UK government in this regard produced breeds of extremists and radicalised individuals who embraced extremist messages from extremist preachers, who for many years were left alone without being challenged by the government. Extremist preachers such as Omar Bakri Mohammed, Anjem Choudary, Abu Qatada, Abu Hamsa and others were unencumbered by the state with their radicalising messages. These extremist messages consequently infected young generations of Muslims in the UK with nihilistic interpretations of Islam, and many of these extremists eventually ended up in prisons. As narrated by Watson (2008), these preachers, via their extremist preaching, successfully recruited "would-be terror planners and attackers" such as Omar Khayam, Asif Hanif, Abdullah Izzaddeen and Sulayman Keeler (formerly known as Simeon Keeler), just to mention a few. Unfortunately, the extremist preachers and their preaching were left unchallenged by government authorities in the United Kingdom until the fruits of these extremist messages began to find expression with radical attitudes, violent belief systems and terror attacks from their recipients.

Furthermore, for more than a decade, until the London bombings, the United Kingdom was supine in the face of verbal attacks from extremist preachers, who were unchecked and free to radicalise and recruit disaffected Muslim youth because the UK authorities believed that to stop them would be equivalent to criticising the Muslim faith, even when they were inciting hatred (Watson, 2008: 81). The failure of the British government to take robust action served only to strengthen the extremists, who felt increasingly invincible in Britain, and weaken the moderate mainstream Muslims who were often slow to denounce the extremists among them (ibid).

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4.10.2. Poor counter-radicalisation efforts by UK government

Another important factor is the general understanding of the issue of extremism and radicalism on the part of the government and its responsive readiness to deal with this menace. In other words, how much does the government know about boomerang effects of Islamist extremist ideological orientation, and how ready was the government to deal with the situation? In an interview conducted by the researcher with a research respondent (RR1), it was argued that the general response of the UK government to deal with the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism in the country is poor, even within the prison estates. The respondent further argued that the problem of extremism and radicalism has been allowed to grow wings in the United Kingdom. This is due to what was described as a "lethal combination" of arrogance and ineptitude from the government. For example, RR1 maintained that within prisons, the separation units, which were recommended to the government by a team of prison reviewers to combating radicalism and extremism among prisoners, have never been leveraged to their full potential to separate, challenge, and treat the most charismatic and subversive hate preachers who groom others into violent extremism (RR 1).

4.10.3. Late resistance of the UK security and intelligence services against extremism

A major factor that renders deradicalisation efforts ineffective in the UK could be the late reactionary steps from the UK security and intelligence services against extremism and radicalism spearheaded by extremist leaders in the UK Muslim communities. The challenge of extremism was allowed to entrench the nooks and crannies of the UK Muslim youth population–an opportunity leveraged by extremist leaders in these communities. It was so bad that when Islamist clerics such as Omar Bakri Mohammed, Abu Qatada, Abu Hamsa and others were busy recruiting their followers into their al Muhajiroun group and inspired many hundreds of young men to embrace radical Islam in the UK, Omar Bakri Mohammed and his ilk were dismissed as fools and cranks by many in the UK security and intelligence services as well MI5 and MI6 (Watson, 2008: 81).

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The followers of these extremist leaders became so deep in extremism and radicalism that many of them did not only embrace radical Islamist ideas but also got specialised terrorist training from outside the UK, such as from Pakistan and Afghanistan (ibid). As Watson (2018) further stressed, echoing the comment of Jonathan Evans (a former director general of M15 and the head of its counterterrorism), the work of intelligence alone will not be sufficient to curb terrorism in the UK. He remarked that the violence directed against the UK is a product of a much wider extremist ideology, whose basic tenets are inimical to the tolerance and liberty which form the basis of democracy in the country (ibid: 39). Similarly, in a 2015 report published by the House of Commons and Home Affairs Committee on counter-terrorism, it is stated that people subject to TPIMs or control orders were able to abscond from the watch of security services (House of Commons, 2015: 10). The report lamented that the UK police and security services were not able to monitor people they claimed were a substantial threat to the security of the country (House of Commons, 2015).

4.10.4. Stigmatisation of Muslim communities

It has been observed that effective counter-extremism or deradicalisation does not work in a vacuum. There is a need to involve communities. For example, the radicalised or extremist inmates are all products of the communities. Unfortunately, the nature of community integration in the UK does not favour effective deradicalisation efforts, especially in the Muslim communities. This is due to the way Muslim communities have been depoliticised from wider civic society and risks of labelling them along extremist lines. Although closer observation reveals that many of the terror offenders and extremist radicals are Muslims, it could be problematic if the government were to generalise a specific Muslim community as having extremist tendencies. This conflict of identity also influences what happens inside jails in the UK in respect of the willingness or otherwise of extremist inmates to participate in deradicalisation programmes while serving their time. It is important to note that for effective deradicalisation to happen, there is a need for proper community support. Where the problem of poor community integration and building trust among the state, law enforcement agencies, and the Muslim

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community exists, such a community would not support the government in achieving its counter-extremism agenda. And if this is occurring outside the prison estates, what can we expect within the prison environment? Scholars such as Awan (2012) have argued that one of the challenges confronting deradicalisation efforts in the UK is the view that Muslims in the country have become a new suspect community, and these risks further marginalising and stigmatising the Muslim communities.

4.10.5. Structural societal issues and negligence of community approach to counter radicalisation

One of the challenges confronting effective radicalisation in prisons is the continued existence of structural societal issues cutting across social and economic deprivation as well as systemic marginalisation that characterise communities in the UK and which have become a major concern to Muslim minorities in the country. For instance, prior to entering prisons, a disproportionately large number of UK Muslims feel that they are underprivileged and not being accepted by their host societies. There are young Muslims who have been radicalised by Islamist Muslim clerics with warnings against integration and about the dangers of rejecting Salafist version of Islam. Hence, maximising a community approach would generate greater outcomes in this process (RR4).

Another research respondent (RR5) who spoke with the researcher claimed that deradicalisation programmes in the UK might not be effective because there are things the UK government is doing wrong, one of which is negligence regarding community approaches to counter-radicalisation, and these are making the problems of Islamist extremism and radical ideology worse in the UK. RR5 emphasised that "I don't think the government has ever taken community engagement seriously. A top-down state-led approach has dominated the Government approach".

4.10.6. Hard-line government approach

There are challenges associated with government taking a hard-line approach to combating terrorism and radical behaviours in communities in the United Kingdom by using law
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enforcement and intelligence agencies. It is useful to leverage intelligence services to tackle terror notice or signals, but the way this action or operation is carried out in several communities in the UK, especially among minority groups, has weakened counter-radicalisation processes among the communities. Spalek (2011: 7) opined that exploring engagement and partnership work between Muslim communities and the police might lead to a form of "new terrorism" because of the hard-line approach the UK government is taking in engaging the community in its counter-terrorism strategies. In addition, Spalek lamented that this hard-line government approach has influenced securitisation policies in Muslim communities, which also leads to stigmatising of Islamic beliefs and practices in the United Kingdom.

In the same vein, Maajid Nawaz (a former jihadist and founding Chairman and Director of Quilliam Foundation—a UK-based counter-extremism think tank) also expressed his displeasure about the way the UK government has handled radicalisation challenges, deradicalisation efforts and the re-integration of radical and violent offenders into normal UK society, especially after the terror offenders have completed their jail time. As a former Islamist and jihadist, Nawaz is disappointed at the hard-line government approach towards deradicalisation and its negligence of community approaches to counter-radicalisation. According to Nawaz (2018), "I will tell you as somebody who has been working in this area all my adult life…Since Theresa May became prime minister, from her premiership onwards till this day, the Government has completely taken their eye off the ball on what we call counter-radicalisation.' Buttressing his argument, Nawaz commented that:

"The only thing you can do with those who have served their (prison) sentences, if you believe in a country that implements the rule of law, you have to release them from jail. The only thing you can do is ongoing deradicalisation efforts with them. And sometimes, they don't work. The second thing is the most important one, because de-radicalisation is extremely inefficient, is preventing them becoming radicalised in the first place" (ibid).

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4.10.7. Operational inconsistencies

Another challenge to the effectiveness of deradicalisation programmes in the United Kingdom is the issue of inconsistencies in the operational governance of deradicalisation programmes. This point was raised by Alex Schmid in his argument regarding the governance of the UK deradicalisation programmes. Schmid (2013) notes that in the UK, following a review, many so-called Prevent efforts have been abandoned for lack of quality control, lack of direction or lack of results. There has been a controversy between those who are willing to fight terrorists with the help of quasi or former extremists (who supposedly have "street credibility" among vulnerable youth) and those who prefer to walk on the safe side and engage more moderate go-betweens from the Muslim community (Schmid, 2013: 46). Sometimes, the radicals might change their ways of life, not only due to push factors associated with incentives offered by deradicalisation programmes, but also because of independent pull factors (Schmid, 2013: 47). In the same vein, a former UK prison governor and counter-terrorism expert, Shane Bryans (2014), looks at the logical and psychological possibility of how deradicalisation programmes should work. Bryans argues that if it is possible for an individual to adopt radical beliefs and attitudes that lead to violent extremism, then the same individual can also abandon those beliefs and attitudes. Deradicalisation programmes should therefore focus on the social and psychological process whereby an individual's commitment to radical ideology and involvement in violent extremism is reduced to the extent that they are no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity (ibid).

4.10.8. Emphasis on managerial efficiency of prisons above primacies of prisons

Another challenge confronting effective deradicalisation in the UK is bureaucratic emphasis on management of prisons, with less attention given to the main reasons for the establishment of modern prison systems. Bryans (2014) asserted that deradicalisation programmes in the UK are problematic because there is overemphasis on managerial efficiency of prisons rather than the real purpose for which prisons are established. It is Bryans' opinion that deradicalisation

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programmes have the best chance of succeeding when they are nestled in a safe, secure, and well-managed custodial setting in which the human rights of prisoners are respected (ibid). In other words, even though prisoners are put behind bars to serve their sentences for the offences they committed, their human rights must not be violated, and the government must not lose the focus of putting them behind bars. In the same vein, Acheson (2019) also refers to bureaucratic demands as a hindering factor to effective deradicalisation in HMPPS. He describes his experience as a former UK prison Governor as disheartening and disenchanting. As a UK prison governor, he became increasingly disenchanted with the direction and ethos of the prison service, which is obsessed with output rather than outcome (ibid). In relation to prison management, rehabilitation of offenders should take priority as success should not only be about reaching numerical targets but focusing and meeting the needs of inmates.

4.10.9. Mis-directional focus of the UK rehabilitation programmes

Mis-directional focus of rehabilitative programmes for offenders in the UK is an important challenge that is confronting deradicalisation efforts in the country (Gov.uk, 2018). The UK penal system emphasises three purposes of imprisonment: first, to protect the public from harm; second, as a retributive punishment for offenders; and third, for the purpose of rehabilitation. Providing offenders with the opportunity to reflect on and take responsibility for their crimes and prepare them for a law-abiding life when they are finally released is as important as the first and second purposes of imprisonment. However, when the rehabilitative objective of imprisonment is misdirected, then the whole essence of imprisoning an offender fails. Therefore, a well-guided rehabilitative programme for prisoners is needed to achieve, not only deradicalisation objectives, but also the end goal of incarcerating offenders. For emphasis, the British prison system, among others, is established to promote a just regime of punishment that could efficaciously correct and rehabilitate those who have committed crimes (Gov.uk, 2018). Unfortunately, little is being accomplished in this regard because many of the rehabilitation programmes focus on changing the individual offenders, while the government turns a blind eye to the societal factors that landed the offenders in prison in the first place.

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As noted by a research respondent (RR2) during an interview with the researcher regarding why ex-prisoners could still go ahead and commit terror crimes, even though they had undergone rehabilitation programmes while behind bars, RR2 argued that:

I think, you know, within the prison systems, there have been several actions that have been taken to try and reduce susceptibility to extremism. So, the prison authorities have introduced a prison system that is based on theory of people coming into prison and getting access to rehabilitation programmes. Most of those rehabilitation programmes are based on a philosophy of changing the individuals' thinking, behaviour or thoughts. So often, there is a lot of focus on changing the individuals or giving them new skills in some ways, or a new way of managing their emotions, or new ways of trying to tackle their thought processes. Okay, so most of the rehabilitative programmes presently in the UK are in some ways based on changing the individuals and not necessarily tackling their situation or their social or community status that increase their vulnerability to these actions in the past.

The need for a well-structured rehabilitation programme that leads to positive reformation of prisoners cannot be underestimated when it comes to combating radicalisation. This is required so that Islamist prisoners would do not remain a danger to their communities while they are in custody and after they leave prison. In 2016, three incidents of hostage taking were reported in a prison in Staffordshire, including an incident where five prison officers were taken hostage by a prisoner wielding a twin-bladed weapon (Chidzoy, 2016). Commenting on these incidents, the then UK Prisons Minister, Andrew Selous, stated that "Our prison system indeed needs reform, which is why we are giving prison governors greater freedoms to innovate with the aim of finding better ways of rehabilitating offenders". We have to ensure prisoners can be rehabilitated so they are no longer a danger to others (Chidzoy, 2016).

4.10.10. The policy errors of the UK government

The effectiveness of deradicalisation programmes in any jurisdiction requires maximisation of correct approaches. Therefore, to achieve deradicalisation objectives, proper policy approaches must not be compromised. In the case of the UK deradicalisation strategies, there are notable policy errors taken by the UK government which have backfired in its efforts to combat proliferation of radical ideology within and outside its prison estates.

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The first noted policy error of the UK government in its deradicalisation efforts is connected to the manner of handling radicalisation and violent extremism challenges within its Muslim communities, while the second policy error is related to the handling of prisoners' release processes prior to joining the community in the UK. The UK government's approach in handling the problem of radicalisation and extremism within its Muslim communities has been observed as a hindering force that is contributing to ineffectiveness of its deradicalisation efforts. It should be noted that engaging and understanding Muslim communities in dealing with the upstream of extremism and radicalism is critical to achieving deradicalisation objectives. The extent to which the government can leverage this platform would determine whether the problem of radicalisation can be resolved at the grassroots level. Lerner (2017), in a conversation with Gilles Kepel, criticised the United Kingdom government for the manner it initially handled the problem of radicalisation at community level, which consequently backfired on its communities with repeated occurrences of terror attacks in cities like London and Manchester. The UK government subcontracted the management of its Muslim population to the local community brokers, an attitude rooted in the Raj system in India (Lerner, 2017). It is claimed that in London, shelter was given to radical Islamist leaders from around the world as a sort of insurance policy against jihadi terrorism (Lerner, 2017). As further narrated in Lerner's report, in places like Manchester and Birmingham, the UK government relied on Salafi community leaders while discouraging the highly fragmented police force from engaging these communities (ibid). In other words, the UK government preferred to use Salafist leaders to handle deradicalisation of radicals and violent extremists in these communities, with the result that jihadists took advantage of this platform to become more radical.

The second policy error of the UK government is related to the processes of release before prisoners join the community. Prior to the Streatham terror attack in February 2020, the UK government had a policy that prisoners must serve their time up to the halfway point, then be released automatically and unconditionally without engaging the risk assessment processes of the Parole Board (Gov.uk, 2020). Meanwhile, the Parole Board, among other responsibilities, is

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tasked to determine whether prisoners serving indeterminate sentences and those serving certain determinate sentences for serious criminal offences continue to represent a significant risk to the public (Gov.uk, 2021). It was a policy mistake of the UK government not to engage its Parole Board to risk-assess radicalised Islamists (such as Anjem Choudary, Khairi Saadallah, Khalid Moshood, Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman and others) who posed a major security threat to the peace of the UK communities prior to their release from prison. However, the 2020 Streatham terror attack perpetrated by Sudesh Amman (who was newly released from Belmarsh prison) forced the UK government to change its policy and discontinue the system of releasing prisoners after they had served their sentences up to the halfway point. The new policy demands full engagement of the Parole Board in the final release of prisoners (Gov.uk, 2020). Offenders in the UK are no longer automatically and unconditionally released at the halfway point. The policy requires that the release of prisoners before the end of their sentences must be approved by the Parole Board after necessary risk-assessment processes (Gov.uk, 2020).

4.10.11. Absence of formal mechanism to risk-assess deradicalised Islamist prisoners

An effective deradicalisation programme implies that its recipients are no longer seen as a risk to the community. In the UK, it is currently difficult to ascertain whether the country's deradicalisation programmes possess a formal mechanism to risk-assess deradicalised Islamist inmates. To risk-assess Islamist prisoners implies to make predictions based on the behavioural indicators demonstrated by a particular prisoner. With reference to an Islamist prisoner, risk-assessing would imply that there is likelihood that such individual would not engage in violent or terror actions in the future. Meanwhile, it is difficult to give this assurance in the current deradicalisation programmes of the United Kingdom. In other words, the absence of a formal mechanism to risk-assess Islamist prisoners after undertaking deradicalisation programmes does not give assurance to the government that the participants are terror-free. A Home Affairs security analyst stated that the government has been intensifying efforts to prevent jihadis from spreading their influence on the inside and when they are free, but the methods have not been tested (Dearden, 2018). The absence of formal mechanism to risk-assess prisoners is problematic

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because it is possible that if the radicalised prisoners have a conducive environment before and upon their release, they might be likely to proceed into terror actions. In other words, when ex-jailed Islamists are exposed to risk-facilitating circumstances after their release from prison, their tendency to engage in terror offences or other criminal activities are predictable.

Meanwhile, the terrorist actions perpetrated by radical Islamist ex-prisoners such as Khalid Moshood, Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman and Khairi Saadallah in the year 2017, 2019 and 2020 respectively confirmed the danger of absence of a formal mechanism to risk-assess terror offenders who have passed through the UK deradicalisation programmes while in custody. Following the 2020 Streatham terror attack in London, a report from the United Kingdom House of Lords Library argued that there is need to have effective rehabilitation processes in places for prisoners. This is because there is a real problem with deradicalisation and disengagement programmes in the United Kingdom, including an absence of a formal mechanism to risk-assess prisoners prior to their release. This implies that prisoners in the United Kingdom are likely to reoffend unless something is done about the absence of a formal mechanism to risk-assess prisoners before their release from prisons. While it is true that longer sentences for terror offenders might have an impact, it only delays the inevitable (House of Lords Library, 2020).

4.10.12. Deficiency in government-community management of ex-terror prisoners

Another important challenge that is contributing to ineffectiveness of the UK deradicalisation programme is the weak structure of government and community partnership in the management of terror offenders who are newly released from UK prisons. The responsibility of the government in partnership with the local community to effectively manage ex-prisoners is crucial in the achievement of deradicalisation objectives as well as its effectiveness. Government and community support to ex-prisoners, including the newly released terror offenders, is significantly necessary to prevent the ex-prisoners from reoffending. Currently in the United Kingdom, there is enough evidence justifying a level of deficiency in the government-community management of ex-terror offenders. Unfortunately, this deficiency has led to re-

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engagement of some ex-prisoners in criminal activities and terror offences. For instance, in June 2020, just six months after Khairi Saadallah left Her Majesty's Bullingdon Prison, the radical Islamist ex-prisoner went ahead and stabbed three men to death at a park in Reading (O'Gara, 2021). Sudesh Amman and Usman Khan also perpetrated deadly terror attacks in London after they came back to their communities from serving jail time (Dunleavy, 2020; Christian, 2020). The same scenario happened in the case of Khalid Moshood, the 2017 Westminster terror attacker. These incidents confirm the contour that exists in the management of ex-prisoners after their release from UK prisons. It should be noted that post-jail management of ex-prisoners, especially the management of Islamist prisoners, requires a joint effort between the government and the community. This effort is as important as when these prisoners were kept and managed while in custody. As one research respondent (RR3) lamented and advised:

All the various arrangements for the supervision of terrorist offenders "in the community" (i.e., outside of prison) use structures and agencies that are philosophically and organisationally unsuitable for the management of this threat. There should therefore be one terrorist prisoner management service, covering individualised treatment programmes, risk assessment, release decisions and resettlement supervision. Individuals who go into the streets and stab strangers with impunity are in no conventional way rational". "So, we need to step up the surveillance, treatment, and protection of those whose psychological disorders may predispose them to strike. No more generic, psychosocial interventions invented by well-meaning professionals. Indeed, we need to seek the support of communities when terrorists are released from prisons, working in partnership with the various protective services. It needs to be a joint effort.

Effective deradicalisation requires proper monitoring of newly released prisoners, especially those who pose a risk to national security. While it is true that most prisoners who are released face enormous challenges, and supporting them during their post-jail life is a huge task, how can prison deradicalisation efforts be result-oriented if they end when the prisoners are done serving their sentences? What happens to them after they return to join the community? A post-jail study conducted in the UK by Prison Learning Alliance reveals that around 70 000 prisoners leave prisons every year and return to communities (Cooney, 2019). However, the study claims that at least 58 000 of these prisoners remain jobless within a year after their release from prisons

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(Cooney, 2019); this obviously includes radical Islamist prisoners who probably became radicalised while they were serving their time and those who genuinely became deradicalised when they were in custody. Nevertheless, the question is what and how would life be for these 58 000 ex-prisoners in the UK communities with no job, no education, and no support? That is why the management of ex-prisoners, including ex-Islamist terror offenders, requires a strong and joint effort between the government and local communities.

4.10.13. Government failure to fully utilise separation centres

Created in 2017, one of the objectives of separation centres is to separate extremist radicals who pose the highest risk to normal prisoners within the prison estate (HM Prison & Probation Service, 2017: 22). Other prisoners can also be placed in these separation centres if they are involved in planning terror actions or are considered to pose a threat to national security. Furthermore, those who are spreading views that might encourage or influence others to commit terror crimes, or anyone whose views are being used in a way that undermines good order and security in prisons may also be placed in these centres (HM Prison & Probation Service, 2017: 22). Nevertheless, it has been observed by some UK security analysts and counter-terrorism experts that the UK government has not maximised the existence of these separation centres to tackle radicalisation processes within its prison estates, and even the centres that are in use are confronting major challenges that are contributing to their ineffectiveness (O'Gara, 2021; Acheson, 2020b; Powis et al, 2019). O'Gara (2021) laments that the UK government's failure to remove terror offenders from the general prison population and locate them in the separation centres has resulted in the emergence of hierarchical Islamist gangs across many of the UK's high-security prison estates (O'Gara, 2021: 6). The author further reveals that as of February 2021, there are only five terror offenders being housed in the UK separation centres. In addition, O'Gara (2021) argues that irrespective of the deadly attacks perpetrated by radicalised inmates, two out of the three separation centres currently remain unstaffed, unpopulated, and useless (ibid). Similarly, a study conducted by Powis et al (2019) on the effectiveness of the UK separation centres also revealed specific challenges contributing to the ineffectiveness of the UK

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separation centres, and these include the fact that many of the prisoners who are in the separation centres have refused to engage in their programmes, especially intervention programmes that encourage them to disengage from violent extremist ideas and address their offending behaviours. The study further noted that the prisoners in the separation centres have become withdrawn from the staff and refused to comply with elements of prison regimes—an attitude they had demonstrated while they were in the main prison wings (Powis et al, 2019: 30). It should be noted that the main function of the separation centres is to house the most dangerous, radicalising influences in the UK prison system and assist them to disengage from their radical mindset. However, the abandonment or minimal usage of the separation centres to address radicalisation disengagement speaks volumes, as this does not reflect UK government's commitment to confronting proliferation of Islamist radical ideologies within its prison estates.

4.11. Conclusion

In conclusion, since the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States of America, Islamist-motivated terrorism, rooted in radical ideology and violent extremist orientation against Western cultures and infidels, has found a new direction in terms of recruitment of new members, training, and the eventual readiness to perpetrate terror actions through diverse instruments. This development has found expression in many European countries, including the United Kingdom. Apart from the United Kingdom's experience of terrorism during "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland, Islamist terrorism represents one of the biggest challenges faced by a European country. The emergence of 21st-century global jihadism, coined by Rapoport (2004) as the fourth wave of terrorism, is an indication of this development which has manifested itself in major cities in the United Kingdom, especially in London, the capital city of the country.

Paradoxically, prison environments in the UK have in recent years attracted radical Islamists to propagate their extremist ideas among vulnerable inmates, which serves as a potential precursor to terror actions for the radicalised inmates before and after their release. This development has brought to the attention of the UK and other European governments, as well as the general

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public, the need to pay more important and strategic attention to prisons both in terms of rehabilitation of offenders and counter terrorism operations in the country.

This has also drawn the attention of academics and researchers to the significance of academic investigation regarding the connection between correctional environments in the attitudes of radicalism, extremism and terror tendencies among inmates in the UK and other jurisdictions. Unlike in the past, when radicalisation and violent extremist behaviours were limited to free movers, recent terror attacks in the UK and other European countries (perpetrated by former and serving prisoners) have revealed a new turn in the act and study of terrorism and violent extremist actions.

In other to combat this challenge, the UK government has initiated strategic policies aimed at stemming the problem of radicalisation and violent extremism behaviours within and outside of its prison systems. Generally, the outcomes of the UK counterterrorism and deradicalisation programmes, especially within the prison estates of the country, have not scored high compared to other European countries which have been noted to have effectively stemmed their radicalisation challenges. Meanwhile, the ineffectiveness of prison deradicalisation policies in the UK was brought to light with concurrent incidents of terror attacks in London in late 2019 and early 2020 with the perpetrators being noted to have had encounters with Islamists while serving their jail time. In addition, some of the UK deradicalisation programmes have been heavily criticised by experts, academics, policymakers, and the public as ineffective, and these programmes only focus on changing radicalised individuals, while neglecting the forces that motivated the violent extremism and radical ideas in the first place.

With the development of radicalisation in the United Kingdom—be it Islamist-motivated or far-right based—a series of measures have been initiated by the government to combat these challenges. Nevertheless, the government deradicalisation programmes remain controversial and heavily criticised as ineffective. These criticisms include the fact that government approaches have been top-down and not bottom-up. That is to say, the government approaches have so far

concentrated on hard-line approaches, with the sole aim of changing extremist ideas and orientations of radicals and not maximising soft approaches which are community focused.

As has been pointed out, continuity of terror actions with prison connections in the UK has raised a lot of debates and queries regarding the functionality of the prison system and rehabilitation of offenders; nevertheless, terror incidents perpetrated by Islamist radicals such as Khalid Moshood, Khairi Saadallah, Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman and host of others do not necessarily mean the prison system could not achieve deradicalisation objectives, nor does it imply that there is rehabilitation of prisoners, including terror offenders. What needs to be done in the UK is to fully leverage tailored programmes that engage individuals based on their needs. It should be noted that deradicalisation is a complex process and it takes time to disengage a radical from violent ideas. The complex nature of human beings is another factor of consideration in deradicalisation processes. Significantly, it should be noted that no programme can be guaranteed to bring a desired change to Islamist prisoners. In other words, looking at the complexity of societal factors that produce Islamist inmates with criminal behaviours and the environment of prisons where the so-called inmates find themselves, reformation cannot be done overnight. Individuals embrace changes by choice and at will—not by force.

Importantly, although the UK government, among other things, has initiated specific legislation with the aim of combating or stemming terror offences and violent behaviours within and outside of its prison system, it must be noted that legislation does not change people. The UK government needs to go beyond a set of rules and laws to create systems that propel or influence radical inmates to embrace the desired changes. Again, in its continuous effort to resolve the challenges of violent extremism within its correctional facilities, the UK government might need to learn what works from other jurisdictions and apply such ideas.

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CHAPTER FIVE: THE UK GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSES TO RADICALISATION: LESSONS LEARNED AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL COHESION IN THE UK

5.1. Introduction

Islamist terrorist attacks motivated by Salafi jihadism have become a common phenomenon in many nations of the world, including several European countries such as France, Spain, Germany, Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. Different countries have had different reactions to this menace. However, for a nation like the United Kingdom, terrorist attacks are not a new phenomenon. Decades ago, the country combated terrorist activity orchestrated by the Irish Republic Army (IRA) during "the Troubles" in Northern Ireland (one of the four nations that make up the formation of the United Kingdom). However, in recent years, the United Kingdom has witnessed several terrorist attacks orchestrated by Islamist radicals and violent extremists, including Islamists who had spent a period in prisons and made effort to influence other inmates with their extremist ideas. This development has motivated the UK government to initiate specific security strategies with the aim of curbing and combating the upstream of radical ideology and violent extremist ideas within and outside its correctional environments. Attempts are made in this chapter to examine the pros and cons of the UK government security responses to the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism with a view to outlining lessons other nations in Europe and beyond could learn to make their security policies more effective and resulted-oriented. In other words, this chapter seeks to explore specific lessons drawn from the responses of the United Kingdom in its fight against the problem of Islamist radicalism and violent extremism within and outside its prisons and analyses specific implications these responses have on social cohesion in the United Kingdom.

5.2. Lessons learned

5.2.1. Proactive decision making

One of the significant lessons learned from the UK government's effort to combat and prevent the spread of radicalisation and violent extremism in the country was its proactive initiative to understand the depth of the problem, both within and outside its prison establishments. For example, to fully understand the depth of radicalisation and violent extremism occurring within the UK prison's facilities, the then Justice Secretary, Michael Gove took the initiative of setting up a team of practitioners with the responsibility to conduct an independent review of the threat posed by Islamist extremism in prisons, the probation service and the youth justice system. This was done in autumn of 2015 when Ian Acheson, a former UK prison governor, was appointed to lead the team. As Acheson (2017) noted, the assignment of this team was totally independent, without fear and favour and without any interference from bureaucrats. This proactive decision of the Ministry of Justice was badly needed to look at the threat that transnational terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremist ideology poses to peace, security, as well as safety of the UK and other countries in Europe. Importantly, beyond solving the problem of radicalism behind bars in the United Kingdom, it was also hoped that the outcomes of the review exercise would proffer answers and directions that would impact on policy and practice that would provide better management of prisons and prisoners in the UK and other nations that are also experiencing the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremist ideas.

Moreover, the proactive approach of the United Kingdom against the upstream of radicalisation and violent extremist ideologies provided stimuli for other countries in Europe and beyond to tackle terrorist ideological orientations within their TACT orders. To buttress this point, the United Kingdom's policies on preventing radicalisation to violent extremism generated a dimension of inspiration and served as a guiding light to the operational design of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in Europe (European Commission, 2020). The RAN is a network of frontline practitioners, who work daily with those who are vulnerable to

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radicalisation and those who have already been radicalised. RAN members consist of civil society representatives, social workers, youth workers, teachers, healthcare professionals, local authority representatives, police, and prison officers, and they are spread across Europe and engage in both preventing and countering violent extremism in all its forms as well as rehabilitating and reintegrating violent extremists in European countries (European Commission, 2020). By the same token, many deradicalisation practitioners from European countries and elsewhere benefited from the experiences of the United Kingdom in terms of the techniques used for dealing with radicalism and extremism in their jurisdictions. Also, the UK's comprehensive approach to national security against radical elements involves all key sectors of government and civil society in the country working toward achieving success in the coordination and implementation of the Prevent strategy, and this has been inspiring to many members of RAN across Europe and beyond (ibid).

5.2.2. Experts and practitioners capable of tackling radicalisation challenges

The magnitude of the problem of Islamist radicalisation within and outside prisons requires capable, fearless, and qualified professionals to withstand the storm. This is important due to the level of insecurity Islamist extremism and radical ideas pose to national unity, safety of people, protection of property and stability of government. It should be noted that Islamist ideology always struggles for power and dominance over liberal state and society, and perceived weaknesses within are always exploited by Islamist radicals. Importantly, because prisons are complex environments with diverse human challenges, it would require the services of capable experts as well as practitioners who have a solid understanding of the governance of prisons to handle the situation. Therefore, the United Kingdom Ministry of Justice under Michael Gove assigning capable experts to undertake the 2016 Prison Review was a brilliant step taken to combat radicalisation and violent extremism behind bars. Consequently, the findings of the review team enable the UK government and its citizens to better understand the depth of radicalisation challenges within the prison estate and the required policy steps to be taken in confronting and preventing the upstream of radical ideas among inmates within the prison estate

of the United Kingdom. Gove's decision to review the UK prison conditions should serve as a lesson to countries such as Maldives, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, France, Germany, and host of other countries that are dealing with the sting of radical Islamists' terrorism and violent extremist ideas. For example, a country such as Maldives in Southeast Asia (noted for radicalisation and jihadists' terror attacks in recent years) could learn substantially from the UK's experience of dealing with its problem of radicalisation behind bars and terror attacks (Counter Extremism Project, 2020). According to the Counter Extremism Project (2020), over 188 cases related to Islamist extremism were reported between 2014 and 2019 in Maldives. For Maldives to solve its radicalisation challenges, the country needs to confront the issue by assigning capable experts and practitioners to examine the depth of the problem within the nooks and crannies of its communities, without excluding its correctional environment. This will also include engaging the professional services of civil society organisations that work with local communities and collaborate with government-established deradicalisation initiatives to tackle the upstream of violent extremist ideas that lead vulnerable youths to engage in terrorist activities.

5.2.3. Recruitment of qualified prison staff and training of personnel

The United Kingdom Institute for Government (2019) noted that between 2009/2010, reductions in spending on prisons and the number of prison officers in the UK jeopardised the effectiveness of prison services in the country, and its performance continued to deteriorate (Institute for Government, 2019). The UK government eventually recognised this need and dedicated the required resources to the recruitment, selection and training of professionals who work in prisons to efficiently manage its prisoners and also to be able to combat the upstream of radicalisation behind bars. As UK Justice Secretary Robert Buckland claimed, the UK government has recruited over 4 500 new prison officers to join the prison establishment, bringing the total figure of UK prison staff to 22 500 officers. This is in addition to the appointment of 700 extra probation service officers who joined the system (Buckland, 2019: 2). However, what Robert

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Buckland did not clarify is whether the prison workforce is large enough to handle the volume of tasks required of the UK prison management.

With reference to the above argument, the French government has a lesson to learn from the UK's response to its prison challenges. One of the challenges of the French prison system is shortage of staff and personnel. It should be noted that even though the French government always has budget priority on other things, spending on recruitment and development of qualified staff to manage its prisons should be included in the top priorities of the French government's financial plans (French Press Agency, 2020). The policy of adjustment of increase in prison staff recruitment is not only needed by France as a country, but also relevant to other jurisdictions that desire to achieve better outcomes in their deradicalisation efforts. Spending to ensure a functional prison establishment, where prison objectives are accomplished is not a waste of financial, human and material resources. This is because the vision of a functional prison system cannot be achieved without recruitment of competent and capable prison staff. It should be noted that the prison estate is not only a social service centre of great significance that provides platforms and environment to offenders in order reform their lives, but it is also a space that keeps the public safe from criminals and people who pose a risk to the security and peace of the state. Therefore, the need to have an adequate quality and quantity of capable prison staff cannot be over-emphasised.

Significantly, effective management of prisons also requires constant exposure of prison staff to relevant and up-to-date professional training. This is crucial to ensure decent management of prisons as well as management of prison populations. Taking France as an example, combating Islamist radicalisation and violent extremism in French prisons requires prison staff to have professional insights. Combating prison radicalisation requires much more than providing psychological therapy or delivering pieces of advice to Islamist inmates who have committed themselves to the Salafist mission of killing their fellow citizens in the name of their religious beliefs. The need for professional development and equipping of prison staff to be able to handle extremist tendencies behind bars cannot be underestimated and should be prioritised.

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5.2.4. Aiding prison establishment

Radicalisation and violent extremism in prisons requires dealing with a wide range of offenders, such as those who committed terror crimes, accomplices in terror planning and ordinary or normal inmates who are vulnerable or susceptible to extremist ideology. Prison officers are often overwhelmed in dealing with this problem, especially because many of them lack adequate knowledge of terrorism and Islamism, skills, training, and the wherewithal to confront the challenges of radicalism within the prison estate. In order to fill this gap, HMPPS and the Home Office jointly established JEXU as the strategic centre for overall counter-terrorism work on prisons and probations. JEXU has oversight of service delivery across end-to-end offender management process (Buckland, 2019). It is also charged with identifying prisoners with extremist concerns or prisoners who have shown signs of being vulnerable to extremism (Buckland, 2019). Moreover, HMPPS also work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders to tackle extremism of all ideologies in prisons (Ministry of Justice, 2019). This implies that for a country like Nigeria, with the challenges of radical Islamists and terrorism, the prison service alone might not be able to handle the problem of radicalisation within the prison establishment, considering the onslaught of radical Islamists and insurgent terror attacks that have lasted for more than a decade in North-eastern Nigeria (French Press Agency, 2021). Therefore, to properly manage incarcerated Islamist inmates in Nigeria, the Nigerian Prison Service requires supportive assistance from other government departments and civil service organisations such as the Centre for Prisons Reforms and Inmates Right (CENPRIR), Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA), Prison Fellowship Nigeria, Justice and Peace Advocates Initiative, Headfort Foundation, Gender Perspective and Social Development Centre. Others include Justice, the Development and Peace Commission and the Carmelite Prisoners' Interest Organisation (CAPIO).

This would enable more effectiveness in its counter-radicalisation and counter-terrorism efforts and consequently contribute to a greater level of outcomes in its deradicalisation operations. There is also a need to work closely with established partners, civil society organisations and

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relevant stakeholders that are capable of providing professional support to aid prison services' efforts in tackling Islamist radicalism in North-eastern Nigerian communities and within its prison establishment. Moreover, considering the complex nature of religious radicalism and its politicisation in Nigeria, the Nigerian government might need to establish specialised government units whose responsibilities would be handling the cases of convicted terror offenders and violent extremist suspects. In relation to the management of prisoners with radical ideas, the issue might also require the creation of a department within the prison system to specifically handle inmates who are considered radicalisers and terrorism ideologues. It is important to understand that to properly deal with radicalism, there is a need to have complete oversight of the behaviour of terror offenders and close monitoring on extremist activities and social networks in communities, without losing control over deradicalisation processes.

5.2.5. Deradicalisation Systemic approach

Reoccurring incidents of terror in the UK have prompted its government to develop specific deradicalisation approaches towards combating the upstream of radical and violent extremist behaviours within and outside its correctional facilities. While this is good, the effectiveness of deradicalisation programmes in any jurisdiction is largely dependent on the approach that is utilised to tackle the problem. This implies that the use of a soft or hard approach in countering or preventing radicalisation and terrorist ideology would determine the effectiveness and impact of such a counter-terrorism strategy as well as the outcome that such an initiative would generate. Even though all countries are not obliged to use the same approach to solve their radicalisation challenges, the UK has been criticised for using harder approaches (such as police measures and surveillance actions) in its response to radicalisation and softer approaches such as community and educational approaches. As noted in Chapter 4 of this study, deradicalisation programmes in the UK might continue to be ineffective due to the use of top-down state-led approaches, which have dominated the UK government's responses in its deradicalisation strategies, while the government has not taken the community approach seriously, even though it is understood that the radicals and extremists are products of the communities. This gives a hint

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to countries with extremist challenges (such as the United States, France, Australia and Southeast Asian countries) to maximise community approach in their deradicalisation efforts and counter-terror strategies and rearrange their deradicalisation and counter-terror approach from top-down to bottom-up.

In this regard, it is significant to state that countries with radical and extremist challenges can learn from the strength and weakness of the United Kingdom's counter-terror approaches. The United Kingdom can also strengthen its security approaches by learning from countries that have recorded success in their counter-terror and deradicalisation strategies. A good example is Australia, which has its own problems with jihadist extremism. For example, since 2012, around 220 people from Australia have travelled to the Middle East to join thousands of foreign fighters engaging in terrorism-related conflicts there. While this number has fallen from its peak in 2015, officials claim that there are approximately 110 Australians who are still actively engaged in terrorism-related activities in the Middle East (Blannin, 2018: 8). However, Australia has tailored its Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) programme to work on a case-by-case basis, with the recognition that the paths to radicalisation may be different from one individual to the next. Australia's CVE is also targeted towards homegrown radicalism as well as threats from Southeast Asian region, especially from Indonesia. Australia's Living Safe Together Programme addresses "push factors" such as those with real or perceived socioeconomic grievances, ethnic and racial tensions, or military actions, as well as "pull factors", which are more psychological and ideological in nature—that is to say, factors that draw individuals to the path of radicalisation and violent extremist orientation. Mirchandani (2017) noted that since the year 2000, the Australian government has foiled four major terror plots and convicted 22 people, mostly born in Australia, through its counter-terrorism operations. By and large, countries with radicalisation challenges such as the UK, France, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria, etc., can generate more and better outcomes from their counterterrorism, counter-radicalisation and counter-insurgency approaches, provided these approaches are targeted towards solving the

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structural social, economic, and political grievances that pushed and pulled some of their citizens into radical belief systems and violent extremist ideas in the first place.

5.2.6. Clear and well-guided deradicalisation framework

Successful management of terrorism-related offenders in prisons in any nation demands a broad clarity around deradicalisation policies and programmes of the government. Defining the aims of deradicalisation policies is crucial because these will help to understand the direction of the deradicalisation agenda and determine how successful such policies would be. In other words, the direction of deradicalisation programmes and policies must be clarified and made easy for communities and stakeholders to render their support. It has been difficult for the UK government to secure maximum support from communities and other stakeholders due to the absence of a clear and effective policy for the management of deradicalisation. This is a signal to policymakers in nations where there is problem of radicalisation and violent extremism to first define whether the goal of their deradicalisation initiatives, such as separation units in their prisons, is "disengagement" (giving up violent ideology) or "desistance" (cessation of offending), and this must be tailored towards individual profiles of terror offenders. Countries with challenges of radical extremist behaviours such as Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Malaysia require a policy framework that is based on clear understanding and direction of the aims of their deradicalisation policies. For instance, implementation of Nigeria's deradicalisation agenda has been characterised with insecurity, dislocation, and unlawful punishment of innocent individuals as well as widespread of human rights abuses (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Before 2015, many of Nigeria's deradicalisation processes involved collective punishment of entire villages suspected of harbouring Boko Haram militants, flawed trials of terror suspects and absence of due legal trial procedures (ibid). In addition, the Nigerian government's deradicalisation programmes featured cumbersome processes including the release of suspected terror offenders after many of them had been in prison for over four years without trial. The process also included court-ordering suspected Boko Haram members to undergo rehabilitation programmes but failed to provide details about what such rehabilitation should entail in order to facilitate their readiness

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and eventual reintegration into society (ibid). Deradicalisation processes that lack clear and well-managed procedures would ultimately fail to disengage radicalised individuals from radical ideas and affiliated groups and consequently frustrate the efforts of the agencies that are involved.

5.2.7. Avoiding the mistakes of the United Kingdom

It is important to understand that regardless of country and region, responses against radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism are as complex as the problems. In other words, policy solutions to the challenges of radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism sometimes attract unpredictable challenges, considering various factors that are involved in solving these problems. In the process, policymakers might make mistakes, as perfect solutions do not always exist. With reference to combating the challenges of Islamist radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism in the UK, the country obviously did not get everything right. There were significant mistakes in its counterterrorism and deradicalisation efforts, some of which are stated below. It is important for other jurisdictions to learn from these mistakes as they engage in countering the challenges of radicalisation, extremist actions and terrorism.

5.2.7.1. Implementation of its counter-terrorism strategies

The United Kingdom did not get it totally right regarding the implementation of its counter-terrorism strategies. For instance, while it was envisaged that the UK Prevent strategy would play an essential role in stopping vulnerable individuals from being drawn into all forms of terrorism and safeguarding them from becoming radicalised, the implementation of the strategy has attracted outcries and criticism from diverse quarters in the country, including the argument that the strategy is not working but instead dividing the UK societies due to its clandestine discriminatory implementation against the Muslim communities (Dearden, 2021) . On the other hand, counter-terrorism experts in the UK have also found reasons to defend the continuity of the Prevent strategy. Their arguments included the claim that the UK Prevent strategy is a hugely effective exercise in safeguarding people who are vulnerable to radicalisation and extremist ideologies; although the strategy does require scrutiny and could be improved, it is undoubtedly

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making a difference on the ground, and that is one of the main reasons it is being attacked (Acheson, 2020b). Therefore, the way forward for nations confronting the challenges of violent extremism and radical behaviours in their communities is to develop a much more individualised counter-radicalisation programme, which is channelled towards an individual pathway into violent extremism and devoid of identity targeting and religious discrimination in order for it to become effective and achieve its objective. As noted in Chapter 3 of this study, some Prevent efforts in the UK have been abandoned due to lack of quality control, lack of direction and absence of results. One of my research respondents commented that:

> *"Even in prisons, Prevent strategy has been ineffective. The pathfinder programme uses a screening tool called ERG 22+ to screen offenders vulnerable to being drawn into extremism. Then, other intervention programmes are deployed to those deemed at risk of extremism. The goal is not to treat offenders mobilised with a defective understanding of Islam who believe they have theological permission to kill with generic psycho-social intervention programmes such as Healthy Identity Intervention".*

5.2.7.2. Unhealthy prison environments

It has been observed through this study that the UK policymakers have not been able to tackle the indecent conditions of many of the UK prisons, even though unhealthy prison environments possess the capacity to hinder prisoners' rehabilitation and reformation, and as such, could also make deradicalisation and counter-terrorism efforts difficult. Prisons that are characterised by prevalence of drugs, alcohol, overcrowding and instruments for self-injury struggle to achieve prisoner reformation, not to mention deradicalisation from dangerous Islamist ideologies. Overall, prison deradicalisation programmes in the UK remain ineffective, while its prison environments are also indecent, unhealthy, and out of order. Rehabilitation and deradicalisation of prisoners would become meaningful and easier in a prison that is well-ordered, decent, presentable, and safe. Unfortunately, this is not the description of the state of prisons in the United Kingdom.

The above argument serves as a signal for nations such as France and countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and North America to make their prisons conducive for prisoners, while they

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embark on rehabilitation, reformation and deradicalisation activities. It should be noted that prisoners who serve time in prisons that do not meet basic human welfare and human rights requirements could, as a result, harbour grievances against their governments and might not cooperate with deradicalisation efforts of such governments. According to French President Emmanuel Macron, "The current conditions of many prisons in France are disgraceful" (French Press Agency, 2020). It is reported about French prisons that nearly 1500 mattresses are placed on the floor for prisoners in France to sleep because of insufficient beds (French Press Agency, 2020). This is in addition to the complaint from a group of French prisoners that personal space allocated to them, and other prisoners was below the required minimum of three-square meters (32 square feet) (ibid). In October 2019, it was recorded that France had about 70 800 people behind bars at 188 penitentiaries, whereas the official capacity of prisons in France is 61 065. That is an occupancy rate of 116% (ibid). In addition, prisons in France have been criticised for having a shortage of personnel, a condition that prompted French prison staff to embark on two weeks of nationwide strikes in January 2018 (ibid). As Butler (2017: 14) argued, situational factors within prison environments such as these (overcrowding, staff shortages, poor prison design, inadequate facilities, restricted surveillance, and inadequate staff training) could provide prisoners with a platform to form groups and establish a powerbase within the prison estate, and they could eventually intimidate other inmates and destabilise the prison system.

Therefore, the French government, as well as governments in other jurisdictions, need to understand that deradicalisation and countering violent extremism behind bars entails reasonable efforts, including prison conditions that fulfil the human rights of incarcerated individuals as well as adequate and trained prison staff, whose professional welfare is well-catered for. Particularly, deradicalisation of prisoners in France might remain ineffective as long as the French prison environments remain as they are with insufficient prison staff. It is important to note that bad prison conditions would make it easier for charismatic Islamist prisoners to recruit vulnerable inmates into their violent ideological orientation and make it more difficult for violent extremist prisoners to be deradicalised. Moreover, bad prison conditions could increase the number of

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prisoners who would perpetrate terror actions while in custody or do the same upon their release. As Johnston (2009: 3) noted, prisons often give extremists a platform to regroup and preach their radical ideologies, so that many prisoners who were not radical prior to their imprisonment could become radicalised. Liebling and Maruna (2015) also argued that instances of fear, anxiety, loneliness, trauma, depression, injustice, powerlessness, violence, and uncertainty are all part of the experiences of prison life and serve as diverse sources of vulnerability for prisoners. The vulnerability features of prisons alone are enough to cause emotional and psychological traumas for prisoners, not to mention additional challenges being experienced with indecent prison environments characterised by lack of provision of human needs.

5.2.7.3. Oversight of the Parole Board

The Parole Board of the United Kingdom has a major role to play in the risk assessment prior to the final release of terrorist prisoners who have served the required time before joining the community. The UK Parole Board is shouldered with the responsibility of determining whether prisoners who are serving indeterminate sentences and those serving certain determinate sentences for serious offences continue to represent a significant risk to the public (Gov.uk, 2021). In other words, the responsibility of the UK Parole Board, as an independent body that carries out risk assessments of prisoners, is to determine whether such prisoners are worthy to join the community or not. Unfortunately, terror incidents in the UK in recent years have revealed the consequences when the Parole Board fails to properly engage in the risk assessment processes of a radicalised prisoner before his eventual release to the public. Possibly, the terror actions of the post-jail Islamists such as Khalid Moshood, Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman and Khairi Saadallah could have been prevented had there been proper engagement of the UK Parole Board.

European Union member states such as Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and other nations that are presently incarcerating returnee foreign terrorist fighters in their prisons have a lesson to learn from the UK regarding the necessity for effective involvement and engagement of

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a parole board to risk-assess and determine the release of radicalised prisoners. Besides the problem of homegrown terrorism and radicalised citizens behind bars, the EU member-states are currently battling with handling hundreds of their citizens who have served with the Islamic State terror group as foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria (Acheson & Paul, 2019). It should be noted that failure to properly risk-assess these foreign fighters and radicalised prisoners may result in terror attacks, as demonstrated by the cases of Khalid Moshood, Usman Khan, Sudesh Amman and Khairi Saadallah in the United Kingdom. It is obvious that many of the EU's incarcerated returnee foreign fighters will one day complete their prison sentences and be released into the community; hence, it is crucial for these countries initiate strategic systems that properly risk-assess incarcerated returnee foreign fighters, terror offenders and extremist inmates prior to their final release. In this regard, there is a need for availability of risk assessment tools in order to aid the operations of the parole boards in these countries, the absence of which could provide radical Islamist prisoners the opportunity to deceive the prison administration in order to receive their release, after which they might proceed to pursue their extremist agendas.

5.2.7.4. Underutilisation of separation centres

Failure to maximise separation centres within the UK prison estates is one of the missing points in the UK's efforts to combat radicalisation and prevent terrorism in the country. Established in 2017, the separation units are meant to segregate inmates who pose the highest risk to normal prisoners (Powis, et al, 2019). However, the failure of the UK government to fully utilise the separation units within its prisons has resulted in continuous interaction of Islamist radical inmates while they are in custody with consequent unprecedented terror attacks. A good example was the intimacy and frequent interaction between Omar Brooks and Khairi Saadallah while in custody. The aftermath of this interaction was Saadallah's stabbing spree terror attack which led to the murder of three men (James Furlong, David Wails and Joseph Ritchie-Benneth) at Reading Park in England in June 2020. This is a point of note for nations that are currently dealing with cases of extremist and radical offenders that separating extremist inmates from other prisoners is advantageous. In other words, separating extremist inmates from the rest of the

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prison population would safeguard innocent and vulnerable inmates from the poisonous ideological advertisements of radical Islamist prisoners and, by implication, prevent the likelihood of terror actions within and outside the prison estates. Even though some scholars have argued against separation units within jails, it has been proved by the UK experience that separating extremist offenders from the general prison population is healthier than allowing them to interact with normal prisoners. To avoid the error of the UK government regarding its underutilisation of separation units, it is therefore advisable for countries that use "jails within jails" as a counter-radicalisation measure to maximise their separation centres and ensure that dangerous prisoners and radical extremists from across ideological spectrum are completely separated from the general prison population and from one another (O'Gara, 2021). Islamism is a virus of the mind, and like a virus, it is important to break the chain of transmission; therefore, by cutting off their contact with impressionable prisoners and the oxygen that is fuelling their ideas, dangerous extremist offenders could be prevented from radicalising others, and such action would consequently prevent the likelihood of future terror actions (O'Gara, 2021).

5.3. The United Kingdom counter-terrorism strategies and their societal implications

The high frequency of Islamist terror attacks in the UK has prompted policymakers in the country to launch counter-terrorism policies such as Prevent and other counter-extremism initiatives. However, the question is: generally, what effect do such counter-terrorism policies have on the UK societies? This sub-section attempts to examine and understand the impacts of the UK security strategies and practices on community cohesion, government-community relations, travels through UK borders, movement of people within the country, educational institutions, minority groups, Muslim communities as a group, places of religious worship, equality and human rights of UK residents and other aspects of societal engagements. Understanding this is essential for social cohesion and peaceful co-existence in the UK and would also assist policymakers in improving future policy formulation for the security and welfare of the people of the United Kingdom.

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5.3.1. Impact on Muslim identity in the United Kingdom

In recent years, Muslim identity in the United Kingdom has come under serious stigmatisation as a result of the activities of terror actors and violent extremists who identified with Islamic religion. In addition, the names of many arrested and convicted terror offenders in the United Kingdom also indicate that they identify with Islamic names, which directly and indirectly intensifies the level of stigmatisation of Muslims (see Chapter 4). For the purpose of clarity, this does not conclude or suggest that Muslims are terror offenders.

Besides this, Muslim identity in the United Kingdom is also battling with the serious challenge of insecurity as the UK government continues to implement its security strategies against Islamist-motivated terrorism and radical extremism stemming from transnational terrorism and homegrown violent extremism that have led to many incidences of terror attacks in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. According to a UK government report, since 2001, 237 British Muslims have been convicted of terrorism-related offenses, while 48 of them have been placed under security control and 228 have been referred to intervention programmes as people deemed at risk of radicalisation and violent extremism (HM Government, 2011). This is beside the numbers of British Muslims who went to Syria and Iraq as members of the Islamic State (IS), while some others served as foreign fighters for the dismantled Islamist group (Bettison, 2009). Moreover, government figures also indicate that at least 2 000 people in the UK are regarded as "security concerns" by the security services (Bettison, 2009). Even though the stated figure does not specifically indicate how many are Muslim by faith, the UK security services contend that the main objective of many of these individuals is transnational terrorism inspired by Al-Qaeda (Hussain & Choudhury, 2007). This could explain why the UK government's security strategies, with the aim of confronting the challenges of radicalisation and extremist ideas in the country, implicate the Muslim communities and thereby stigmatise Muslim identity.

In addition, prison service data shows that 87% of prisoners linked to terrorism in the UK are identified as Muslims (Lambert & Githens-Mazer, 2011). Given the nature of the actual and

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planned Al-Qaeda-inspired terrorist attacks in the UK and elsewhere, these numbers reflect a serious security challenge for the police, intelligence units and security services. In addition, of the fact that many prisoners who identified with the Muslim community and later engaged in terror attacks—whether while in custody or upon release (Chapter 4)—explains why the government's reaction to this development might stigmatise Muslim identity in the UK. However, from the perspective of the Muslim population of over 2.5 million in the country, individuals involved in terrorism-related offences are perceived as a tiny minority of Muslims. Often, Muslim communities are told that there is a "serious" security threat to the United Kingdom stemming from transnational terrorism, which they must help prevent (Home Office, 2011), and yet this does not resonate with their daily experience of discrimination based on their religious identity. This contributes to a perceived disconnect between the state's insistence on the primacy of the threat of transnational terrorism and communities' lived experience of a wide range of social problems such as drugs, violent gangs, unemployment and racism, which are identified as posing a more real and concrete threat of insecurity to Muslim communities and other minority groups in the UK. This suggests that anti-terrorism policy in UK must recognise that perceptions of threat to British Muslims' identity and their communities are real, and engaging with them in implementing Prevent strategy would be result-oriented.

5.3.2. Impact on travels through the UK airports, seaports and borders

Implementation of the UK security strategies also affects travels through airports, seaports and land borders in the United Kingdom. For example, Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act of 2000 provides designated port officers with unique powers to search people who pass through the United Kingdom's borders (Haley, 2009). Schedule 7 is one of the vital tools the police use to keep the public safe using stop and search. It allows specially trained police officers to stop, question and, when necessary, search and detain individuals and goods travelling through the UK's borders to determine whether they may be involved or concerned in the commission, preparation, or instigation of acts of terrorism (Counter-terrorism policing, 2020). The use of Schedule 7 to stop people has been instrumental in securing evidence to support the conviction

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of terrorists, helping intelligence to detect terrorist threats and supporting the disruption or deterrence of terrorist activities (Counter-terrorism policing, 2020).

According to study participants, exercise of stop and search at borders, airports and other ports in the UK under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act of 2000 has some of the most significant negative psychological impacts on travellers moving in and out of the UK. Schedule 7 powers can be used to interrogate anyone for up to nine hours to determine if they are involved in terrorism (Home Office, 2011). Basically, anyone could be arrested and there is no need for "reasonable suspicion" before an individual is arrested (Hillyard, 2005). It is not possible to have a complete picture of the extent to which Schedule 7 has been used or abused in the UK since 2001 as the Home Office only released figures for the total number of reviews for the first time in 2010 (HM Government, 2011). It revealed that 85 557 stops took place at UK ports in 2009/10, 2 687 of which lasted more than an hour (Home Office, 2010: 40).

Between 2001 and 2009, 13 272 Schedule 7 examinations lasting over an hour were carried out (Human Rights Watch, 2010). The impact is felt by those arrested, as well as by their family and friends travelling with them or awaiting their arrival. For some people, especially Muslims, these stop and search instances became a common part of their travel experience, Although, Counter-terrorism policing (2020) claims that the stop and search exercise plays an important role in deterrence as well as providing a means of gathering information from a detainee on their possible involvement in terrorism, the abusive effect on innocent people is serious. For example, the perception that Schedule 7 stop and searches are based on religious profiling was reinforced by questions asked of travellers and individuals such as how many times per day they pray, the names of mosques they attend, their understanding of jihad, their knowledge of groups and organisations of Muslim communities, etc. (Campbell & Connolly, 2008). These questions have heightened anger over Schedule 7 judgments (Brittain, 2008). It is observed that its power is silently eroding the confidence of the UK counter-terrorism community policing. Although government officials and police officers are aware of the impact it has on UK residents and travellers, Schedule 7 was not part of the government's recent review of counter-terrorism and
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security powers. Evidence from this study suggests that there should be a review of the use of Schedule 7 power and continuous publication of data on the actual number of stops and search operations at borders, airports and other ports in the United Kingdom.

5.3.3. Impact on movement of people within the United Kingdom

Since 2001, more than a half million street searches have been conducted by security agents using Section 44 of the Terrorism Act to stop and search individuals on the street in the UK, though many of the searches have not led to convictions in relation to terrorism (Home Office, 2011). However, for many Muslims, especially young men, being stopped and searched in the streets by security agents has become a frequent experience and painful part of their lives. For some, the frequency with which they are arrested or observe others being arrested contributes to a feeling of alienation and perceptions of racial, identity and religious discrimination. Some of the study's research respondents described Section 44 as a brutal tool and potentially damaging government-community relations in the UK because, when it is used, it is often implemented by less experienced officers. Even though the extent of its use by some police officers has been criticised, practitioners have argued that it is an important tool in specific circumstances.

Similarly, the use of surveillance cameras has also been a major issue in the UK, where as part of Project Champion, the police have placed a net of cameras around several areas with a high Muslim population (Amoore & De Goede, 2005). The measure has been criticised for collectively stigmatising and targeting Muslims in these areas (Bettison, 2009). The lack of transparency and failure to consult and consider the views of local communities were also major criticisms in this regard. Anger over the surveillance cameras was particularly intense among individuals from community organisations who had worked closely with the police in the fight against terrorism. They felt that this undermined the confidence between their community and the police and the mutual respect they have developed over the years (Bright, 2007)

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5.3.4. Impact on government and local community relations

The level of relationship that exists between the security agents and local Islamic communities in the UK could impact anti-terrorism legislation on human security. It is noted that the Muslim communities that had good relations with the government were better placed to deal with signals of extremism and radicalism after 9/11 (Haley, 2009). Nevertheless, since 9/11, local Muslim communities have faced greater insecurity in the form of verbal and sometimes physical violence (Bettison, 2009). It is generally believed that Muslims, as a group and as individuals, are assumingly held responsible for the actions of terrorists, with hostile behaviours being expressed against them, especially after a terror attack or incident occurs (Bettison, 2009). This might also be because almost all jihadist terrorists who committed terror attacks in the UK bear a Muslim name. Moreover, this is also fuelled by the hostility in the political and media debates around Islam, Islamism and enactment of anti-terrorism laws and policies.

The Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) programme was a topic of considerable concern during the interviews for this study as many of the respondents concluded that the management of Prevent is problematic, hence its failure to achieve its objectives. Relatedly, funding to support implementation of Prevent Violent Extremism is problematic in some communities in the UK, especially when it is aimed at security, capacity building and community cohesion, as this makes Muslims feel like they are being treated as a "suspect community", which has aroused resentment in these communities, thus compromising cohesion (Hillyard, 2005). Others felt that Prevent Violent Extremism has led the UK to misrepresent Islamic activities and exaggerate the threat of Islamism in the country (ibid). The study respondents noted that the Prevent strategy is failing due to the lack of transparency around the allocation of funds to local groups coupled with the lack of focus and clarity regarding the nature and scope of the programme.

The point is that law enforcement officials are obliged to understand and apply national and international human rights standards of human dignity in the performance of their duties, especially while implementing security strategies. This is necessary because when the rights of

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local communities are violated, their confidence and trust in the security agencies of the state are eroded and it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for a state (that is fighting Islamist radicalism and violent extremist ideology) to earn the needed cooperation of its local communities.

5.3.5. Impact on schools, universities and mosques

Schools, universities and mosques are spaces where young people explore ideas and develop critical thinking as well as a sense of identity and belonging. Not surprisingly, schools, universities and prisons have been noted as among the major locations where radicalisation occurs (House of Commons, 2015). Hence, in the UK, these spaces have necessarily been targeted by the counter-terrorism policy. And although schools, universities and mosques play a significant role in counter-radicalisation and counter-terrorism operations, the actions of the UK police and security services have led to violation of human rights and consequently influenced some Islamic student societies to feel threatened under close security surveillance (Innes et al, 2011). Relatedly, some mosques used to meet regularly, organising programmes that focused on countering radicalisation and terrorist ideologies in their communities, while others focused on developing their structural governance and the skills of their imams to ensure they communicate effectively and build closer relationship with young Muslims in their areas (Briggs, Fieschi & Lownsbrough, 2006). However, there are those mosques that do not deal with terrorism-related issues. Some of the imams leading these mosques feel that they do not have the skills or necessary training for this task. For yet others, it reflects a sincere belief that mosques should focus on the spiritual needs of their congregation and avoid any political issues (ibid).

5.3.6. Impact on homes and families in the United Kingdom

Since 2001, 1 834 terrorism-related arrests of Muslims have taken place in the United Kingdom (McGovern, 2010). More than three quarters of those arrested are released without charge and only 13% have been convicted of terrorism-related offenses (Brittain, 2008). The fact that the majority of those arrested were innocent makes many Muslims in the UK and their family members feel that they too are vulnerable to being treated in the same manner. Anxieties were

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exacerbated among arrested family members due to lack of understanding key aspects of judicial processes, including the length of pre-charge detention and the processes for bringing individuals to charges (Bright, 2007). In general, since most arrests did not result in charges, efforts to ensure discreet arrests with minimal publicity have been viewed positively. From the perspective of this study, it is suggested that as security services carry out their duties under the Prevent strategy, the government has a critical role to play in containing the fallout from police raids and unjustified arrests in the United Kingdom

5.3.7. Impact on freedom of speech in the United Kingdom

Among other things, implementing security strategies under the UK Prevent strategy has resulted in the violation of rights of citizens and residents to freely express themselves as they fear being reported to the security agencies. In other words, since the emergence of the UK Prevent strategy, freedom of speech of citizens and residents such as students, teachers and parents has been affected directly and indirectly. For instance, parents in the UK have become cautious when discussing contentious issues at home in case their children pick up such discussions and repeat things discussed at home among their peers in schools, which might trigger action being taken against the parents by government authorities (Standford & Ahmed, 2016). Similarly, it was noted that freedom of expression has been seriously impacted in the cause of implementing security strategies in the UK, especially under the Prevent strategy. Even though institutions of learning, particularly universities, are widely treasured for their ability to foster open and constructive dialogue and debate on controversial issues, the process of implementing the Prevent strategy within educational environments in the UK has curtailed the freedom and liberty of students and teachers in undertaking healthy debates and discussions on issues that are relevant and necessary for the good of the human community but are now regarded as sensitive topics due to security implications they might have on the discussants and people who spearhead the debates. According to one research respondent:

> *Obviouslsy, the Prevent Duty has a dimension of influence on the freedom of speech of students and teachers in higher education especially when it comes to speaking about Islamic matters. Both students and*

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academics alike are always conscious and sometimes nervous to discuss sensitive issues on Quran and Islam and Islamist behaviours that sometimes stigmatise Muslim identity. It is very painful that this is the case now due to the fear Prevent Duty imposes on the right of freedom of expression, association and religious debates in academic environments (RR9).

It is so serious that teachers and students have now become seriously hesitant to discuss sensitive topics in classrooms. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Terrorism and Human Rights has been particularly critical of any measures which impede the freedom of speech of students and teachers, suggesting that educators should not be required to act as watchdogs or intelligence officers, nor should they be obliged to act in ways that might impinge the right to education, academic freedom, or freedom of expression, thought, religion or belief (Standford & Ahmed, 2016: 54). If students, teachers, parents, and other citizens in the UK are unwilling to debate or discuss controversial issues legally and freely for fear of being reported to security agencies, then their rights to free speech are being violated and compromised.

5.4. Conclusion

The 21st-century Islamist terrorist activities have found expression in many nations of the world, especially European countries. The UK has consistently experienced Islamist terror attacks, which motivated its government to initiate specialised security approaches to combat the problem of radicalisation and violent extremism in its communities, including its correctional environments. Nevertheless, what is clear is that countries of the world, whether in Europe or elsewhere, have so much to glean from the responsive approaches of the UK government in its efforts to combat radicalisation and violent extremism within and outside its prisons. This chapter has attempted to examine specific implications of the UK policy responses on global security with particular case studies. In addition, the chapter explored the varying impacts of the UK security approaches on societal cohesion such as on families, schools, universities, places of worship and other important areas such as the human rights of the people of the United Kingdom. It is hoped that gleaning from the UK responses to the challenges of radicalisation

would assist other nations to make better decisions with improved outcomes in their fight against radical Islamist orientation.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

Central to contemporary and progressive constructions of the purposes and objectives of prisons is that they should provide suitable conditions for the rehabilitation of those incarcerated. This study has noted that apart from keeping the public safe and secure and creating a space for criminals to be punished for their crimes, prisons are also established to create an environment and provide opportunities for criminals to reflect on and take responsibility for their crimes. This entails rehabilitation programmes for their reformation towards living better lives upon their release. Unfortunately, terror attacks in European countries in recent years, particularly in the United Kingdom, have classified prisons as environments for nursing and spreading radical ideas and violent extremist orientations among inmates. Even though Islamist and extremist ideas are not new and go beyond prison estates in term of initiation of radical ideology and recruitment of vulnerable individuals, this development has caught the attention of the UK government, policymakers and the public and is being understood as a growing transnational threat that ultimately challenges national security, safety and stability in the country.

This study critically examined the growing development of radicalisation and its linkage with terrorism behind bars in the United Kingdom. It examined the narratives and actions of terror perpetrators who were UK citizens and had served sentences in the country's prisons. Among other findings, this study affirms that the level of relationship that exists between the government and local communities has the potential to shape the impact of anti-terrorism legislation on residents' safety and security and goes a long way towards determining the level to which people would be able to trust and cooperate with counter-radicalisation strategies and counter-terrorism agencies. In addition, combating the onslaught of radicalisation within and outside prisons in the United Kingdom and elsewhere requires a concerted cooperation of state security and security experts. Sometimes, it might also require international collaboration between security practitioners and intelligence services. This would safeguard the peace, security and safety of

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residents in the United Kingdom and elsewhere from the threat posed by radical Islamists with violent extremist ideas.

This study has also found that there are divided opinions about the UK Prevent counter-terrorism strategy, and therefore, a review of its implementation has been requested. Even though the UK Prevent counter-terrorism strategy means well, with the goal of preventing and safeguarding individuals in the country from extremist orientation and radical ideas, the strategy has also attracted a lot of criticism and debate. The voices opposed to the Prevent strategy are against its discriminatory implementation, including the argument that the strategy is against the Muslim communities and not working, but instead causing division in UK society. That is why the government is being advised to review its implementation or otherwise scrap the strategy. Nevertheless, security officials and counter-terrorism professionals in the UK have differing views on the Prevent strategy and therefore defended its continuity. They are of the opinion that the strategy is still in its infant stage and is a hugely effective exercise. Although it could be reviewed, it needs to continue because it has prevented significant numbers of individuals in the UK from becoming vulnerable to radicalism and violent extremist ideologies. In defending the strategy, the counter-terrorism experts argue that the reason the Prevent strategy is being opposed is because it is achieving its objectives.

Through this study, it has been observed that combating prison radicalisation requires much more than providing psychological services or delivering pampering messages to extremist prisoners who have dedicated themselves to perpetrating terror actions in their communities and killing their fellow citizens who do not subscribe to their extremist orientation. As a result of this, it is of the utmost importance that prison officers be professionally equipped to spot and handle extremist tendencies behind bars. Prioritising prison staff training to function in this regard has become more than necessary. In addition, effective management of prison estates requires constant exposure of prison staff to relevant and up-to-date professional training. This is crucial to ensure decent management of prisons as well as humane treatment of prison populations.

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Furthermore, the study notes that the management of normal prisoners within the UK prison system is a huge responsibility for prison establishments in the country, as prison staff are required to provide basic human rights services and welfare to inmates, including security, orderliness as well as ensuring required rehabilitative activities are carried out within the prison estates. Most of the time, these duties pose their own challenges to prison staff, and sometimes, undertaking them could attract unprecedented outcomes. That is why prison staff and prison establishments in general constantly need government support and community assistance. On the other hand, it has been established in this study that managing offenders with violent extremist and radical ideas places a greater dimension of responsibility and public expectations on prison establishments as well; hence, prison staff should not be left alone to face this daunting task.

By and large, in its efforts to proffer solutions to the upstream of radicalism and violent extremism across the United Kingdom, the government has initiated some legislation—notably, the Prevent strategy. However, as indicated in this study, the implementation of the Prevent strategy has attracted a lot of criticism from certain quarters in the United Kingdom, especially from minority populations such as the Muslim community. The general view of the Muslim population in the UK of the Prevent strategy is that the programme stigmatises and discriminates against their religious identity. The strategy is also viewed as ineffective in confronting violent extremist ideas in the UK communities such as schools, universities, and places of religious worship. The responsibility for public protection in the UK lies with the security services and law enforcement officials of the country. These individuals are required to understand and apply national and international human rights standards in the performance of their duties. In this regard, engagement with individuals, groups and local communities needs to be undertaken without violating their human dignity on account of race, identity, and religious identity.

From the perspective of this study, solutions to radicalisation and violent extremism are inexhaustible because of the complexity of the phenomenon. So far, the efforts of the UK government to combat radicalisation challenges in the country are in their infant stage and there is room for improvement. The government could do more, provided the social and political

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challenges that prompted radical and extremist elements in the first place are attended to. It must be noted that solutions to prison radicalisation must commence from outside the prisons because inmates are products of the communities in which they live. This effort requires intentional and continuous commitment from the government, leveraging soft approaches such as building dynamic and strategic relationships with local communities in the UK with the aim of resolving the radicalisation menace and creating more spaces for the youth to be involved in the governance of the country.

It should be noted that rehabilitation and deradicalisation behind bars is not automatic. In essence, reformation of prisoners would not happen without their cooperation. Deradicalising from extremist ideas requires the willingness and cooperation of radicals to change their ways of thinking, belief, and behaviour. For instance, with reference to the case of Sudesh Amman, who committed a terror attack in February 2020, just few weeks after he was released from Belmarsh prison, Murphy (2020) argued that the prison service could not be blamed for what Ammon did. Buttressing this argument, Ian Acheson (a former UK Prison Governor) argued that the prison service obviously could not be blamed for lawfully releasing this man when they had to. However, Acheson commented that, "I am more concerned about what happened when Sudesh Amman was in custody (Acheson, 2020b). Acheson added that, "I am still unconvinced that the prison service itself has the aptitude or the attitude to assertively manage terrorist offenders" (Acheson, 2020b). However, Sudesh Amman's case does not conclusively imply that prisons cannot work to deradicalise radicals. Nevertheless, prison will work only if prisoners, including radical or extremist inmates, allow it to work for them. Prison will not automatically work to reform offenders. There are instances where prisoners have positively leveraged prison time to reform themselves. For prison to work, in terms of rehabilitation or reformation of inmates, willingness and readiness to take advantage of rehabilitation opportunities provided by the government are required from inmates. If inmates have the capacity to embrace wrong ideology while in custody, then they could also embrace right ideas. It is about willingness.

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On a final note, prison environments also have a critical role to play in the deradicalisation and rehabilitative effectiveness of radicals and extremist individuals. Currently, the state of prisons in the United Kingdom is not impressive as far as effective rehabilitation and deradicalisation efforts are concerned. In fact, prisons in the UK have been regarded as "nurseries of crime", and there have been situations where inmates have developed diagnosable mental disorders and illnesses, not to mention wrong attitudes and behavioural development issues. A correctional establishment should not be an environment where inmates develop mental and physical challenges that would make them worse than they were as far as their attitude and behavioural attitudes are concerned. In many cases, such environments have fostered radicalisation instead of rehabilitation. These are challenges that require urgent attention from probation and prison establishments, not only in the United Kingdom, but also in other countries in Africa, Asia, North America and other regions. Ensuring that prison facilities in these regions are presentable and suitable for reformation of prisoners could serve to prepare inmates for effective rehabilitation, timely deradicalisation and consequent reintegration into normal society.

6.2. Recommendations for the United Kingdom and other jurisdictions

This research study has touched on significant aspects of the debate on Islamist radicalisation and violent extremism pervading prisons in European nations and elsewhere, with reference to prisons in the United Kingdom. Without any doubt, the study provides timely and relevant policy actions to policymakers in the UK and beyond on how best to respond to the upstream of radical ideas and violent extremist behaviours behind bars where radical ideas are finding expressions with possibility of prisoners engaging in terror actions upon their release from prison. In addition, examined arguments in the study are envisaged to stimulate further debate and research on the discourse of radicalisation and extremism within and outside prison estates both in the UK and other jurisdictions. Therefore, the following recommendations are suggested:

6.2.1. Critical understanding of Islamist ideology, Islamism, radicalism, and extremism

More than ever, policymakers, prison services, counter-terror agencies and security services in the UK and other nations need to deeply grasp a conceptual understanding of Islamism, radicalism, fundamentalism, and extremism in the context of contemporary transnational terrorism and globalisation of violent radical ideas. This is part of the processes of confronting the upstream[2] of transnational terrorism and would consequently assist security agencies who are on the frontline of fighting radicalisation and violent extremism nationally and internationally. This is especially needed in an era when violent extremism and Islamist radicalism, as well as far-right extremism, are finding expressions outside and within prison estates. A critical understanding of the dynamics of Islamism, radicalism and violent extremism requires the attention and commitment of those who are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring safety, security and peace in the United Kingdom and other nations.

Combating radicalisation and Islamist extremism within and outside prisons in the UK and other countries requires policymakers, intelligence services and security officials to understand Salafi-jihadist ideology, its impact and how to deal with this ideological orientation as they engage vulnerable victims of these destructive ideologies. As clearly stated in this study, Islamist extremists and radicals are driven by Salafist ideas that are based on the notion of returning to the supposedly pure form of Islamic practice. It should be noted that for a more comprehensive and effective long-term counter-terrorism policy, policymakers those who are tasked with security responsibility in the UK and other countries should have a thorough comprehension of Salafist ideological orientation. Regardless of their political will, policies, and legislation against radical and violent offences, the UK and countries with Islamist radical challenges might not be able to root out the stems of terrorism, radicalisation, and violent extremist behaviours without a proper understanding of Salafist ideological drives. Trying to reform or rehabilitate Islamist

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[2] In the context of this study, the phrase "upstream of transnational terrorism" is used to describe the increasing proliferation of radical Islamist idea, transcending a national boundary.

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prisoners without a comprehensive understanding of Islamist ideologies is certainly a waste of effort and resources.

This implies that the solutions to violent Islamism that leads to terror actions in the UK and other nations go far beyond legislation or lengthy imprisonment of terrorists or extremist offenders. While longer sentencing is not wrong, the UK government and its counter-terror agencies must understand the ideological drive behind Islamist radicalisation. Agencies that are at the frontline of confronting Islamist radicalisation need to properly understand what they are dealing with and secure proper understanding into the worldview of Islamist radicals. Frontline professionals tasked with deradicalisation of inmates are expected to fully understand the motivations, objectives and strategies of charismatic extremist recruiters and why extremist radicals are always interested in the recruitment of vulnerable inmates.

6.2.2. Maximising soft approaches in deradicalisation and counter-terrorism efforts

It would be worthwhile for the UK government and other countries with the problem of radicalisation to engage in soft approaches to prevent young people from being drawn into radicalisation and violent extremist activities and use the same tool in their deradicalisation operations. One of the best ways to combat radicalisation and avoid the stress of deradicalisation is to engage in counter-radicalisation, and the best way to do this is by maximising community approaches in counter-radicalisation efforts. Community approaches have been noted to deliver results by utilising the experiences of ex-jihadists or former extremists and involving their contributions in deradicalisation programmes and counter-terror actions would help a great deal. Some of these ex-jihadists could then serve as role models to current radicals and extremists. For example, Maajid Nawaz (a former Islamist and founder of the Quilliam Foundation—a counter-extremism think tank) is concerned about the way the UK government has handled deradicalisation efforts and re-integration of terror and violent offenders to normal UK society. He is an advocate of community approaches to counter-radicalisation and deradicalisation efforts.

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6.2.3. Engaging civil society organisation in deradicalisation and rehabilitation efforts

Although prisons in the UK have been noted as environments where radical and extremist orientations are being proliferated, some UK inmates have taken advantage of higher education opportunities provided by civil society organisations such as Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA) and the Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) while serving their jail time. These prisoner-students have exemplified the role and impact of accessing quality education while in custody. From their experiences, education in prison has provided them a platform to redefine who they are and enabled them to envisage a brighter future for themselves. It is a good platform for the UK government to leverage prison education to achieve its rehabilitation objectives. Thus, it would be worthwhile for the UK government to invest in education in prison, while partnering with relevant and experienced stakeholders in this regard to access higher education and training opportunities for inmates. This, in turn, would become a generative solution towards achieving reformation, rehabilitation, countering radical ideas and deradicalisation of offenders behind bars.

As the United Kingdom continues to combat the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism within and outside its prison establishments, the country is also required to strategise on the best practice to handle the radicals, extremists, and terror offenders as well as radicalised foreign fighters. This is significantly important, not only in terms of how to punish these offenders for their offences but also how to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into normal UK society. Meanwhile, it should be noted that this is a huge task for the government, and as such, the UK government would need to involve relevant civil society organisations that can assist in supporting the government's efforts and meeting the needs of the concerned offenders. Civil society organisations could play a dynamic role by supporting the UK government to initiate and lead as well as plan and execute an action agenda in rehabilitation, countering extremism and reintegration.

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6.2.4. Giving proper attention to the welfare of prison staff and their professionalism

The welfare of prison staff and their professionalism must be prioritised. Prison staff must be trained on radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism. To avoid misconception of Islam and mishandling of Islamist prisoners, it would be helpful for them to undertake training along this line. Prison staffs in the UK need consistent training and increasing skills beyond guarding of prisoners for safety and security purposes. As we know, the world of prisons is challenging and changing; therefore, it is necessary to prepare, train and equip prison staffs with necessary tools and up-to-date skills that meet current and future challenges such as religious radicalism and other forms of extremist ideologies within the prison establishments. Prison staff must be equipped to meet these challenges by putting in place mechanisms for detecting and preventing radicalisation of inmates. Prison authorities require adequate tools to spot and prevent violent extremist offenders (VEOs) from radicalising their fellow prisoners. In addition, high-level professionalism of prison officials would enable them to carefully pick and monitor situational enablers and contextual factors and track them effectively.

6.2.5. Promotion and support of research on prisons

Prison establishments might need to soften their frustrating bureaucratic processes for researchers to conduct value-adding research on prisons, prisoners, and prison management. If the UK government and HMPPS are serious about better prisons and reducing criminality in the country, then more research is required. This also means that adequate funding is needed to support such research studies. The outcomes of such research would assist the government with insights on making relevant policies and informed decisions, including making prisons in the UK and elsewhere environments that deliver expected outcomes and fulfil their objectives.

6.2.6. Fostering the idea of prisons as human development platforms

The UK government would need to leverage prisons as educational and human development platforms for inmates. If Islamist radicals are busy "educating" vulnerable inmates while serving their sentences, then the government could do better by using the same environments to educate

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inmates for human development and against poisonous ideology. Correctional environments in the UK and elsewhere should become places where inmates turn from bad to good, from good to better, and from better to the best citizens. Prisons in the UK and other nations could become places where inmates learn to understand their identity, assume responsibility as value-adding citizens and become law-abiding individuals. In this regard, emphasis should be placed on competence and impact-driven learning more than literacy education. To achieve this, the services of academics, social workers, psychologists, vetted prison chaplains, and mentors are required. The educational curriculum for prisoners must be innovative and unique, holistic, and capable of meeting their spiritual, mental, and physical as well as professional needs. However, this will require a major paradigm shift by the state that will not only see prisons as human development platforms but also work to foster the idea through concerted actions. It is of paramount importance that education to prisoners in the United Kingdom and elsewhere is capable of meeting their needs and prepares them for life after prison.

6.2.7. Respect for human rights principles and acting beyond legislation

Considering the impact of radical Islamist ideology and violent extremist ideas on social cohesion and UK society as a whole, there is no better time to seriously tackle the roots of radicalisation and violent extremism in the country, both within and outside prisons. Generally, it would be difficult to solve the problem of Islamism and radical ideas in the United Kingdom and elsewhere by targeting Muslim communities as potential agencies, initiators and perpetuators of radicalisation and terrorism, even though most convicted Islamist terror offenders are Muslims. Rather, it is necessary for the UK and governments of countries with similar experiences to affirm the principle of human respect and engage in constructive dialogue with Muslim communities in their jurisdictions and defy the illusion that radical ideas and violent extremist orientation that leads to terror acts can be defeated by shutting down opposing opinions from Muslim communities. In other words, community dialogue and engagement are key to solving radicalisation phenomenon in the UK and elsewhere. In addition, radicalisation and violent extremism are complex developments; hence, policymakers should prioritise deradicalisation,

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rehabilitation and reformation of terrorist offenders and normal inmates beyond punishments. As good as legislation seems, it must be noted that legislation is not enough to achieve reformation of offenders, nor is it capable of changing law breakers. The question is: how many prisoners have been reformed through legislation or lengthy sentences? Reformation of inmates occurs when they have access to value-adding and value-driven programmes that can make them better citizens, although this also requires the cooperation of inmates and communities.

6.2.8. Learning from other jurisdictions

Looking at the dismantling of the Islamic State (in Iraq and Syria) and the loss of many locations that were under its control, the number of citizens from the UK and other countries who return from serving as foreign fighters will undoubtedly rise, and it is likely that many of them will be sent to prison. As a result, the UK and other countries will need to consider how best to deal with these returnees when they are eventually put behind bars. For example, it would be helpful to look at countries such as the Netherlands, Kosovo, and Belgium which have been successfully handling their deradicalisation processes. The Netherlands' way of handling terrorism offenders has been seen to be very effective; it has initiated a technique of concentrating terror offenders in special terrorism wings and assigning capable prison staff and practitioners to deal with these individuals during their time in custody and after their release. This initiative has prevented the so-called terror offenders from radicalising or recruiting other inmates while in custody. This system has also been helpful in that it allows the specialised prison staff and practitioners to develop an in-depth understanding and expertise about the cases of these terror prisoners and how to re-integrate them into Dutch society. This technique is also serving as add-on in the expertise and professional exposures of these staff. In the same vein, the United Kingdom and other nations with the problem of radical Islamism can learn from Kosovo, which has demonstrated a good example of how to reintegrate foreign fighters back into normal society, including separation of radicalised individuals from normal prisoners. In addition, in its deradicalisation processes, Kosovo has received relevant international advice on the coordination of its radicalisation programmes for terrorist offenders, training of psychologists, social workers,

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and vetting of prison imams who can address prisoners' ideological danger (Acheson & Paul, 2019). This kind of knowledge sharing helps with benchmarking of good practice when policies on counter-radicalism are being planned and implemented.

6.3. Suggestions for further studies

In the context of counterterrorism and security studies, radicalisation and violent extremism are relatively new areas, particularly considering the development of radicalisation within a specific geographical description as far as its correctional environments are concerned. Radicalisation and violent extremism, particularly in the United Kingdom, remains an understudied area of academic research, and these issues provide room for further academic investigation as the UK government continues its efforts to combat radicalisation behind its bars and proffer solutions to this menace. As a result, there are several areas within the context of this study that require further empirical investigation.

As mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, this study possesses a number of limitations. Therefore, in advancing the discourse on radicalisation behind bars in the UK, it would be revealing to conduct further research interviews (and probably have focused group discussions as well) with hundreds of prisoners, lower- and senior-cadre prison staff and possibly prison governors, as well as chaplains who are directly working with inmates across HMPPS. It is assumed that feedback from these potential research respondents would provide more insight not only on the problems of violent extremism behind bars, but also on how to tackle the challenges of Islamist radical behaviours among inmates in prison estates. In addition, it would be worthwhile to conduct studies on how a combination of factors (such as family dissociation, misguided mentoring of youth, absence of proper parenting, socioeconomic challenges, racial and religious discrimination, Islamophobia, and social injustice) might be contributing to the problem of violent Islamist extremism and radicalisation of youth outside of prison environments in the United Kingdom, which could push them into engaging in terror.

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Another area that could be explored in further studies is how the government in the United Kingdom could leverage prison estates as human development centres. This is because Islamist inmates in the UK prisons have explored prison environments to recruit and further their cause. The question is: how can the government take advantage of prison facilities not only to deradicalise inmates but also to empower them as future responsible citizens, capable of adding value to their communities? Furthermore, studies into the subject of radicalisation of inmates while in custody also require exploring how the clergy or chaplains and religious volunteers in the United Kingdom prisons are being employed by the state. It is imperative to raise questions such as: what are the religious affiliations and ideological beliefs of UK Muslim chaplains? What curriculum do they use with the Muslim inmates? What do the backgrounds of the UK Muslim chaplains entail? Were adequate background checks done before they were hired? In addition, investigating the sources of literature that are available to Muslim inmates inside the UK prisons is also crucial. Are foreign countries or extremist groups known for Islamism or wahabism (such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Muslim Brotherhood) supplying or donating literature to prison libraries in the United Kingdom?

Moreover, it would be value-adding to the study of radicalisation behind bars to understand the impact of prisons on prisoners. The world of prison is known to have many complexities with different outcomes for different inmates. How is it that one prison experience produced Nelson Mandela, who became the president of a country, and another prison experience produced Ayman al Zawahiri, who became the leader of a terror group? Human beings are in many ways similar and in other ways unique. Inmates are often seeking redemption, purpose, a sense of belonging and moral stability. Some are even looking for an outlet for their predisposition to crime and violence while in custody. The question is: how do inmates survive and find answers to their longings when they are serving their sentences? For some prisoners, prisons are regarded as universities that offer them higher learning platforms to enhance their criminal skills. In addition, for some convicted terror offenders, prisons offer an environment to perpetrate terror actions or influence other inmates into their radical views. For instance, one of my research

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respondents commented that El Sayyid Nosair was an inmate in Attica State Prison in the United States of America when he conspired to bomb the World Trade Center in 1993. The Al-Qaeda Manual, found by law enforcement officers in Manchester, instructed captured terrorists not only to survive but to thrive while they are incarcerated. Therefore, for further studies on prisons, prisoners and radicalisation, it is important to explore how terror offenders survive jail time and expand their influence.

Significantly, some of the UK's approaches to deradicalisation of radicalised individuals have been criticised with the views that such approaches are actually making the problems of Islamist extremism and radical ideology worse in communities. Some of these arguments included the fact that the UK government has not taken community engagement towards deradicalisation seriously. Similarly, the argument also included the fact that combating radicalisation challenges within and outside prisons in the UK has hitherto taken a top-down, state-led approach, and this has not resolved the issue. It is therefore imperative to investigate how better engagement with local communities, identifying mentors and building bridges with social connectors (people who have the respect and trust of community members) would impact the deradicalisation efforts of the UK government. In other words, could proper community engagement, adequate mentoring of the youth and counselling of extremists by respected Muslim community leaders in the UK have a positive outcome in the government's deradicalisation efforts?

Finally, the study of radicalisation and violent extremism is a complex field of academic research; particularly, extending this area of study to the frontier of correctional environments makes it much more complex. In this regard, this study has noted that religion plays a vital role both in the radicalisation of inmates and in their reformation. Religion plays a vital role in the reformation of prisoners when it is genuinely embraced. This implies that there could be genuine conversion of inmates into Islam and other religions while they are serving their time. This confirms that the penal system could provide an environment where inmates could embrace Islam genuinely while in custody. In this process, inmates could access spiritual, emotional, and practical support to reform their behaviours through religious observations. Nevertheless, such

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inmates require proper follow-up by a genuine Muslim community while they are in prison and after their release so that they do not become victims of charismatic Islamist recruiters. Hence, future research could explore how Muslim communities provide needed support to inmates who embrace Islam while in prison.

Study limitations and future research

The aforementioned limitations of this study do not in any way neutralise its strength; rather the limitations should be maximised as a leverage to conduct further investigations and future empirical studies in the discourse of radicalisation and violent extremism within and outside prisons, whether in the United Kingdom specifically or in other jurisdictions. These efforts would thereby generate deeper insights on this discourse and produce a new outcome of enquiry. It is important to note that even though the original plan to gather primary data for this study from government personnel within the prison estates of the United Kingdom was unprecedently truncated with the emergence of Covid-19 pandemic and consequent closure of all access to UK prisons based on government directive; alternatively, primary data was generated from those who engage with UK prisons from outside. Hence, with access to prison estates in the United Kingdom in the future, it would be more productive to gather primary data from hundreds of prisoners, lower and senior cadre prison staff, prison governors as well as chaplains who directly work with inmates across UK prison establishment. The outcomes of these engagements would definitely strengthen future research on this discourse and its findings would supplement the ones that were generated from this study as this would also produce deeper insights on the discourse of prison radicalisation and extremist behaviours behind bars in the United Kingdom and beyond.

Specific strength of the study

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This empirical research has opened up a new dimension in the study of global security, exploring the phenomenon of radicalisation and violent extremist behaviours of individuals who are institutionalised in European prisons, with specific reference to inmates within the prison estates of the United Kingdom. From the beginning to the end of its chapters, the thesis has demonstrated a high level of coherence based on sound scientific research approaches. The study has evidently produced insightful contributions to the body of knowledge in the context of terrorism, extremism and radicalism behind bars; presenting possible solution to these challenges in the United Kingdom with specific lessons for other hemispheres. In other words, the arguments articulated in this thesis have provided significant contribution to the understanding of current wave of Islamist radicalisation and extremism occurring in Europe with particular attention to the United Kingdom's experience. Considering the weight of its analytical outcomes, the flow of its narratives as well as the quality of its presentation, there is no misgivings that researchers, teachers, and students as well as practitioners who engage in the study of terrorism, counter-terrorism, radicalisation, de-radicalisation and prison studies in the 21st century would immensely glean from its analytical style and logical arguments; while policy makers and security experts in any parts of the world would also draw valuable lessons from the insights discussed. Maximising the lessons, findings and recommendations presented in this thesis would undoubtedly assist those who are tasked with the security of the state in their fight against the twin problems of radicalisation of vulnerable individuals and activities of Islamist terrorists and extremists.

Significantly, the study has been researched thoroughly by acquiring relevant information from primary and secondary data sources, with the data being correctly analysed, integrated and articulated in a convincing manner. It is worthy of note to emphasise that this study has employed appropriate use of data collection methods that are relevant to the discipline and presented its arguments in a format that is acceptably logical, convincing and coherent, meeting international standards of academic scholarship. Specifically, the study is brilliantly innovative, considering the depth and direction of its analytical exploration with reference to why and how

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prisons in the UK are being leveraged by Islamist inmates as radicalisation recruitment centres; the UK government response to combat radicalism and extremist activities behind its bars as well as recommendation that prisons should become human development platforms that seek to maximise the educational and human development of those whose who are incarcerated. In addition, the study equally provided important insights to help guide other jurisdictions on how to learn lessons from the UK experience of combating and tackling radicalisation and violent extremism in its prisons, identifying potential pitfalls for other jurisdictions to avoid and putting forward recommendations that would help global counter-terrorism engagements and assist de-radicalisation efforts. Therefore, the study is tremendously helpful to strengthen global security, peace and development efforts against the dimension of insecurity and threats posed by Islamist extremists and terrorist activities in the 21st century.

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