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Social Justice in ITE – How do we approach Anti terrorism policy and Anti racism in ITE?

TEAN May 2023

Prof Sally Elton-Chalcraft

Are Muslims a suspect community? Why have they been thought so? Are all Muslims suspect terrorists? Can Muslims be defined as a homogenous group? The challenges inherent in answering such questions have led us to interrogate the literature and produce a typology of Muslims as a suspect community based on findings from this literature.

This round table explores how race and ethnicity is considered in ITE with particular reference to Muslim communities. We would argue that Muslim children, students and their families are recognised as the de facto first target of the UK Prevent Policy and there is an emerging consensus that one aspect of the 'Prevent Effect' has been the creation of Muslims as a 'suspect community'. Our project drills down into the how and why Muslims have come to be viewed as 'at risk or risky' and we propose a 'Muslims as a Suspect Community typology', drawing on existing research and our own theorisation, to illustrate the complex continuum from 'potential terrorist' to 'good' Muslim and why some Muslims choose to adopt a 'least Muslim role'. We contextualise the concept of 'Muslims' which highlights the diverse ways in which some Muslims speak about Islam and racism (Abbas 2019; Khan 2016) and whether Muslim youth feel they are viewed as a risk to society and at risk of catching the terrorist disease (Thomas 2020), or if they are vulnerable to radicalisation (O'Donell, 2017) and whether different societal perspectives hinder or support anti-terrorist policy enactment. There are moves to decolonise the ITE curriculum with Lander and Smith's anti racist framework but many feel there is a long way to go (Revell and Bryan 2018; Elton-Chalcraft, Revell and Lander 2022; Warner and Elton-Chalcraft 2022).

The round table will provide delegates with an opportunity to interrogate the ethos and values of our current ITE curriculum and regulatory body criteria; engage with ideas from our typology; explain how Race and Ethnicity is considered in their own setting; and consider if mindset/practice should/ can be changed.

1.Thoroughly understand the issues/ problems

An example :The problems with the Prevent Policy

The ‘Prevent effect’ positions Muslims as a suspect community

Three stances towards Muslims –

- Security forces
- Fearful people,
- Tolerant people

Three ‘types’ of Muslim

- Perceived terrorist (‘bad’ Muslim)
- Potential terrorist (‘bad’ Muslim)
- Harmless (‘good’ Muslim)

Abbas (2015) Kundnani (2015) Pantaziz and Pemberton (2011)

	Perceived as a terrorist (violent extremist)	Perceived as a potential terrorist ('bad' /extremist Muslim)	Perceived as harmless ('good' Muslim)
Suspicious of/ zero tolerance towards extremist views : Security forces and government	1 Incarceration and zero tolerance towards violent extremist Muslims	4 Anti radicalisation and suspicion of extremist/'bad' Muslims	7 Use 'good' Muslims to 'win hearts and minds' of 'suspect' Muslim community .
Fearful of extremist views: - Muslim and non Muslim communities	2 Surveillance and referral of perceived violent extremists to security forces	5 Suspicious of extremist views and 'bad' Muslims Preventing violent extremism	8 Toleration 'good' Muslims who assimilate into secular society.
Tolerant towards extremist views-: Muslim and non-Muslim communities	3 Countering violent extremism Aware of devastating effects of violent terrorists Being Muslim is only one aspect of identity	6 Facilitate communities of disagreement to explore extremism Consider counter terrorism initiatives as counterproductive	9 Trust and respect diverse Muslim identity

2. Openly engage in professional development alongside others

Basic Stance

Developing stance

Improving stance

Professional development- I've been refining a typology of stances towards race equality teaching developing our skills as culturally responsive teachers.

Basic Stance includes a mono culturalism teacher - a tokenistic, compliant teacher who shuts down any controversial debate because deep down they believe in white supremacy, western, patriarchal (male dominated), heterosexual cultural norms. A few teachers are full of fear; or act as agents of surveillance making referrals to the security forces albeit in a safeguarding context. But this positions learners, often Muslims, as villains or victims.

Developing Stance a Colour blind teacher who glosses over difference to make everyone the 'same' (they are the same as us – just a different colour, belief system etc There is a 'chilling' where minority groups feel unable to articulate their views – there is a pretence of safe space – ie no prejudicial treatment because the teacher is safely cocooned in their comfort zone. Minority voices feel 'othered' if they articulate a different opinion. Lockley-Scott (2020) Miah (2017) Kundnani (2015)

Improving stance, the preferable stance Highly reflective critical teachers – aware of their own ethnicity and sufficiently brave to take moderated risks and engage their learners in frank, age- appropriate discussions about racism and its consequences. Many, not all, teachers of RE are 'nice' people, conscientious people, the peacemakers of the classroom with sunny dispositions. It can be challenging but we should move out of our comfort zone, feel uncomfortable, learn from mistakes, and provide a space for all voices to be heard. (Bryan, Elton-Chalcraft and Revell 2018, Elton-Chalcraft 2020)

3. **Bravely advocate** equitable learning and teaching

Draw on professional development to **inform** practice
Work alongside teachers, young people to **challenge** discrimination

Eg Muslim communities ‘ a suspect community’? OPEN discussions –

- are Muslim youth ‘a risk to society and at risk of catching the terrorist disease’ (Thomas 2016), are they ‘vulnerable to radicalisation’ (O’Donell, 2018)
- Does ‘being PC’ prevent detection of
  sexual abuse (Telford)
  trafficking (Mo Farah)
- If Sir Mo Farah (Muslim) hadn’t received a Knighthood would the Home Office have been so lenient about not investigating his British Citizenship?
- Nadhim Zahawi , Priti Patel, Rishi Sunak, Tim Farron: advocates of religiosity (or not)

3. Bravely advocate equitable learning and teaching

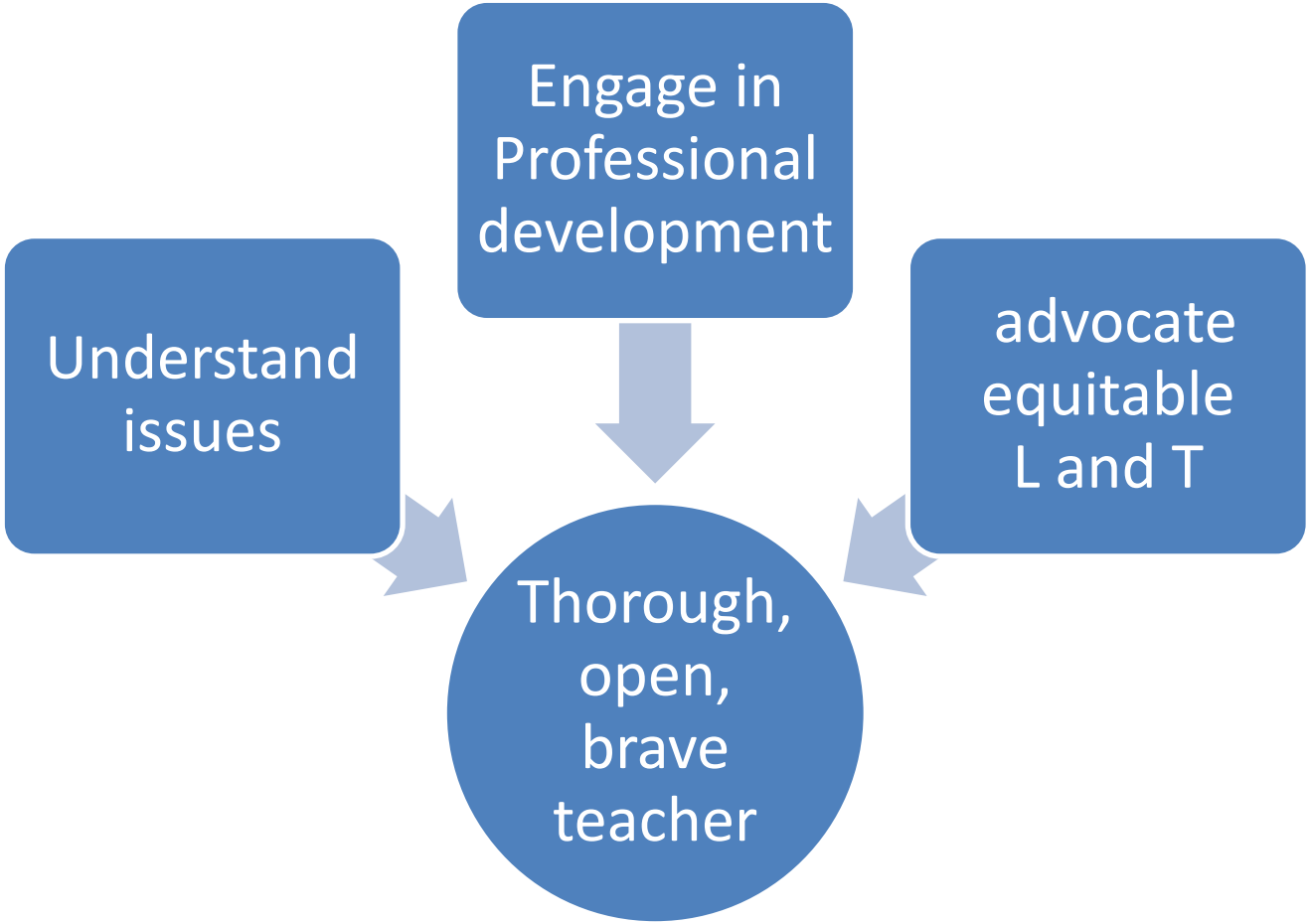
Non brave;

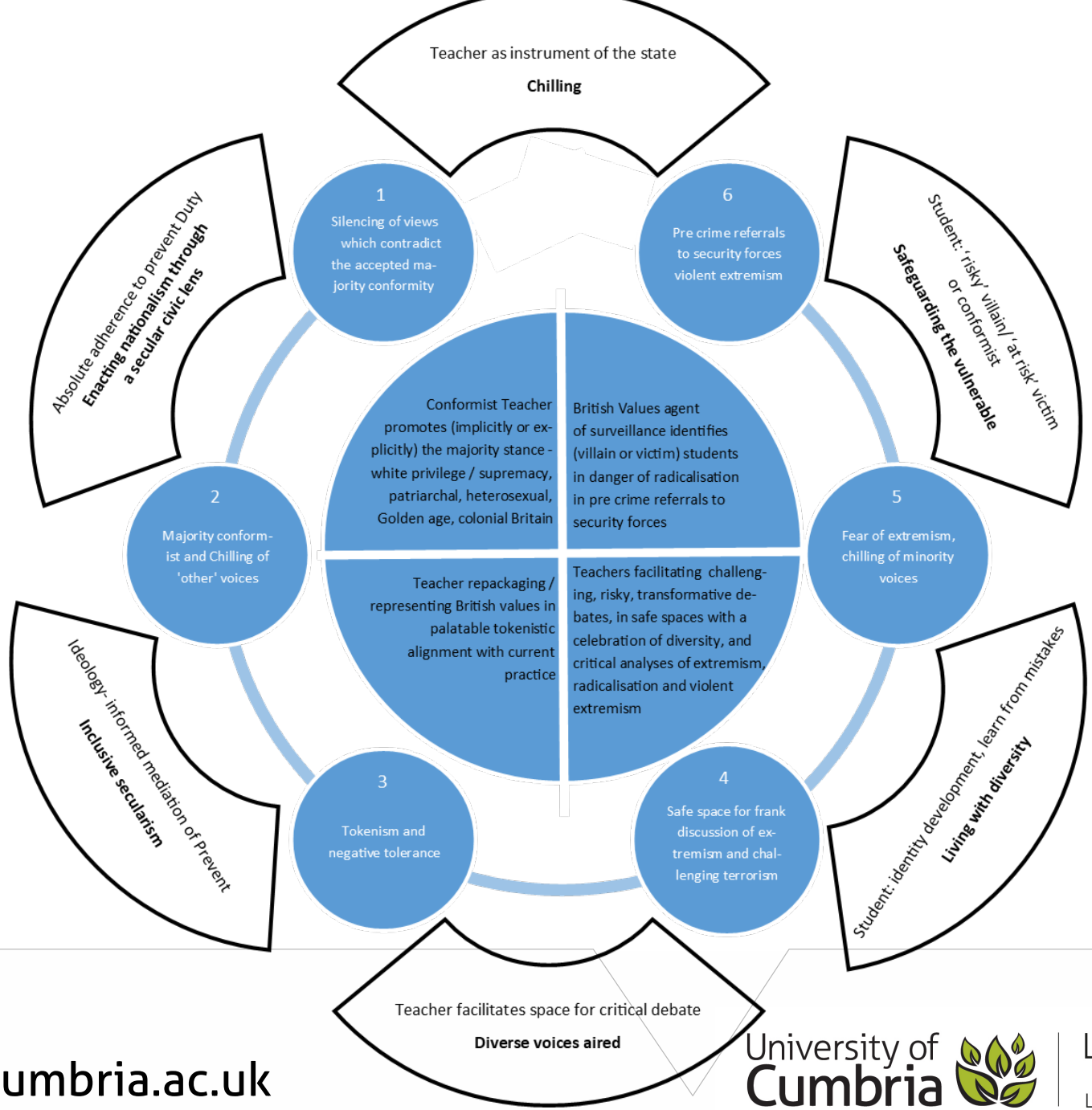
Absolute adherence to Prevent duty **Enacting nationalism through a secular civic lens**	**Teacher as instrument of the state** **Chilling**	**Student: 'risky' villain/ 'at risk' victim or conformist** **Safeguarding the vulnerable**

Brave!

Ideology- informed mediation of Prevent **Inclusive secularism**	**Teacher facilitates space for critical debate** **Diverse voices aired**	**Student: identity development, learn from mistakes** **Living with diversity**

Solutions: what teachers can do




Teacher as instrument of the state
Chilling
Absolute adherence to prevent Duty
Enacting nationalism through a secular civic lens
1
Silencing of views which contradict the accepted majority conformity
6
Pre crime referrals to security forces violent extremism
Student: 'risky' villain/ 'at risk' victim or conformist
Safeguarding the vulnerable
Conformist Teacher promotes (implicitly or explicitly) the majority stance - white privilege / supremacy, patriarchal, heterosexual, Golden age, colonial Britain
British Values agent of surveillance identifies (villain or victim) students in danger of radicalisation in pre crime referrals to security forces
2
Majority conformist and Chilling of 'other' voices
5
Fear of extremism, chilling of minority voices
Teacher repackaging / representing British values in palatable tokenistic alignment with current practice
Teachers facilitating challenging, risky, transformative debates, in safe spaces with a celebration of diversity, and critical analyses of extremism, radicalisation and violent extremism
Ideology informed mediation of Prevent
Inclusive secularism
3
Tokenism and negative tolerance
4
Safe space for frank discussion of extremism and challenging terrorism
Student: identity development, learn from mistakes
Living with diversity
Teacher facilitates space for critical debate
Diverse voices aired

What can teachers do? :

1. **Thoroughly understand** the issues/ problems
2. **Openly engage** in professional development alongside others
3. **Bravely advocate** equitable learning and teaching

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