



Khansa Khalisha and Dr. Gabriel Lele

Department of Public Policy and Management, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,  
Universitas Gadjah Mada

Bulaksumur, Caturtunggal, 55281 Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email: khansakhalisha99@gmail.com

Email: gabilel@ugm.ac.id

**Abstract:** Since its first document release in 2006, the Counter-terrorism strategy which mainly focused on Islamist terrorism has amplified racial tension within British society. The phenomenon of Islamophobia as a lived reality to British Muslim communities can be investigated in the Prevent policy by the framing of government officials which contributed to its emergence. Therefore, the study of this interconnection is imperative to answer the following question, “How has the construction of Prevent policies in British political administrations advanced Islamophobia in the society?” Theoretically, it is argued that the narratives by State actors have influenced the delivery of Prevent, which created a climate of Islamophobia by perpetuating racial and religious discrimination. Further, it is argued that the unstable objectives in British political cabinets by the Conservative and Labour parties contributed to the rise of Islamophobia. So far, the approach to Islamophobia studies has been too positivistic. Thus, the novelty of this article lies in the methodological approach. Wendt’s social constructivism which focused on identity, narrative, and interest is used to analyze the framing of Prevent, by textual analysis and interpretation of primary and secondary data, which were then organized in a thematic structure. This article demonstrated how international cooperation to respond to the threat of global terrorism was strategically constructed in the “War on Terror” era, as advocated by former U.S President George Bush, shortly after the tragedy of 9/11. Further, results indicated that the delivery of Prevent was found to be starkly different between the cabinet of Prime Minister Gordon Brown and David Cameron’s. Subsequently, three major themes between these two cabinets were drawn: national identity and interest, social cohesion & integration, and race equality. Albeit campaigning for the same “A Safe and Stronger Britain”, each consecutive theme illustrated how both administrations differ in ideological goals and approaches. In conclusion, the framing of counter-terror narratives advanced the repressive approaches to Prevent strategy between two political parties, which further provoked negative stereotypes to Muslim communities by targeting all British Muslims as potential terrorists. Collectively, these findings imply a disproportionate consequence to Muslims among other faith groups to coexist in British society.

**Keywords:** Counterterrorism policy, Prevent, Constructivism, Islamophobia

**Biographical notes:** Khansa Khalisha is an undergraduate student at Universitas Gadjah Mada, majoring in Public Policy and Management. Under the supervision of Dr. Gabriel Lele, her thesis centers on Islamophobia and public policy in the UK.